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Twisted Sister's
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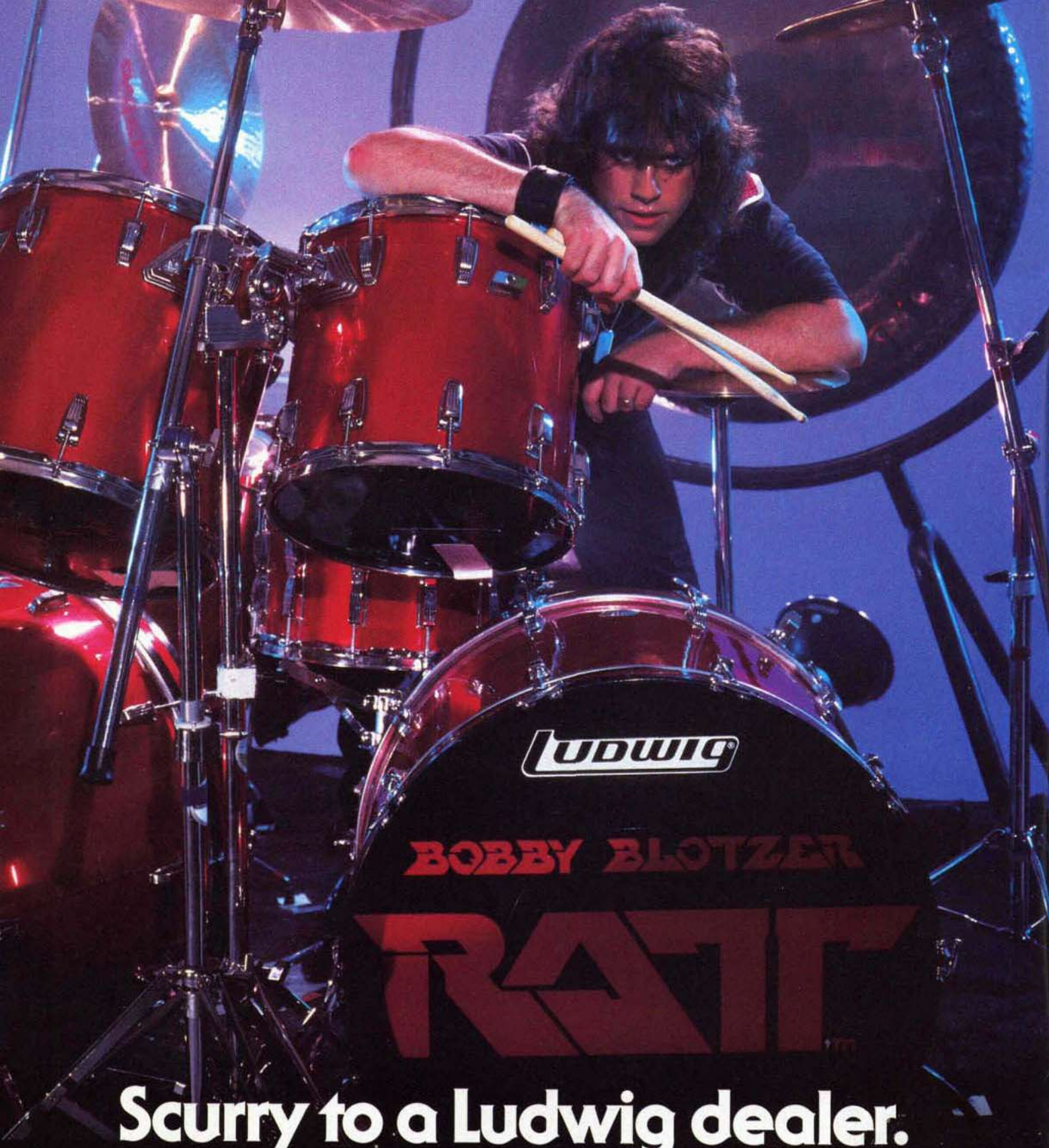
JIMMIE FADDEN
DRUM ROADIES Part 2

Plus: Willie Wilcox's Trapparatus • New Edition's Dan Donnelly • Exploring The Shuffle Beat • Hi-Hat Fanning Techniques



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ROY HAYNES

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He's played with them all—Louis Armstrong, Lester Young, Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, Gary Burton, et al.—and his memories are as vivid as the musical experiences themselves,
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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

Up The Ladder

As Editor/Publisher *of Modern Drummer* for the past ten years, I've been very fortunate to have had the opportunity to meet and speak with some of the leading drummers in the world today. Hardly a month goes by where someone doesn't decide to visit our office, sometimes to discuss important matters, and other times simply to say hello, meet the office staff, and talk drums for an hour or so.

I've always made it a practice, no matter how busy I am, to stop and chat with most every artist who passes through. I particularly enjoy doing this with the younger, up-and-coming players who often stop off on their travels through our area. When you do enough of this, you soon begin to note some common traits that most of these young players possess.

Obviously, the younger drummers who are just now getting their first breaks in our competitive business have done so on the basis of talent and ability, first and foremost. But there are certain other intangibles that go beyond talent, not the least of which is an inspiring sense of enthusiasm. They are all notably enthusiastic about the stage they've reached, and it comes through loud and clear in their attitudes.

There's also a considerable amount of energy that seems to radiate from each of these young artists. No matter how hard they've been working, or how long and far they may have traveled during the past month, they never seem to lose the capacity to maintain a highly supercharged energy level.

It's easy to say, "Sure they're enthusiastic and energetic. That's not difficult to do when you're able to see the light of that big break shining through." But, in truth, these young players are not overly affected by this. Even when they're not working steadily, or when their careers are not going exactly as planned, there always exists a positive sense of optimism, enthusiasm, and excitement about what they plan to do next. Their primary concern is the love for what they're doing, total dedication to the instrument, and an unshakable determination to succeed at it, no matter what.

It really all boils down to attitude. Perhaps that's the *one* word that really places the concept of this editorial in perspective. Sure, it takes more than a good attitude to make it professionally, but one thing is for certain: Without it, you're almost destined to fail. The interesting point is that, along with the training these young musicians have had as players, they've also trained themselves to maintain that positive attitude to the point where it rarely wavers.

Why bring this up? Well, primarily because I think it offers an important lesson to all young drummers planning a career in music. It's not an easy endeavor, as any young, up-and-coming talent would agree, and certain characteristics in attitude literally become as important as the talent itself. It's really doubtful if any of the young players I speak of would have reached that first plateau without it—energy, enthusiasm, and a strong positive attitude. It's all been said before, in a lot of ways, but always bears repeating. The critical intangibles—it's not easy to make it up the ladder without them.

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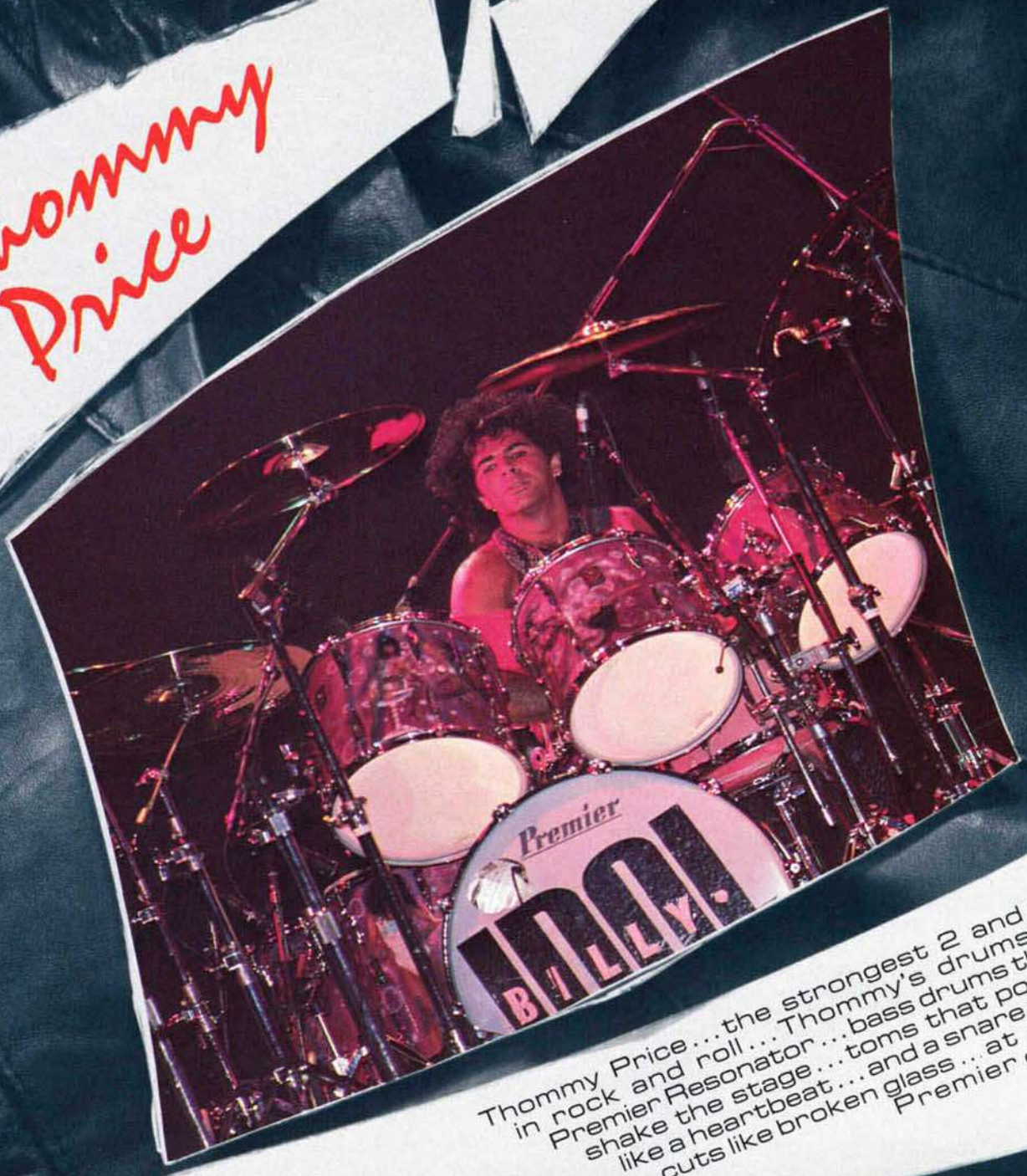

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READER'S PLATFORM

THE DRUM BUG

I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed reading *MD's* November editorial on "The Drum Bug." Boy, did that describe my youth to a "T." I found myself wondering, "How did he know that?" Of course, the only way is that you must have had it, too. Also, thanks for printing my letter in that same issue. It came out pretty well, and I'm glad to have had the opportunity to try to say something to people about what it's all really like out there. All my best to the good people at *MD.* You all keep going from strength to strength.

Neil Peart
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

CHRIS PARKER

I'm a small-town drummer, and I never hear about other drummers except in rock magazines. I recently picked up your October issue, and I am very pleased with *MD.* I enjoyed your article about Chris Parker. I'm glad to know about people who work as hard as I do to achieve the top of their drumming ability. I'd love to hear Chris Parker perform; his interview has inspired me to expand my drumming talent in all areas. (Since I read Chris's interview, I've enrolled in a jazz drum class and purchased a Simmons *SDS7* kit.) *Modern Drummer* has greatly changed my perspective on drumming, and I highly recommend it to young drummers such as myself. Thank you for being there.

Shawn Haught
Payson, AZ

BOBBY CHOUINARD

Finally, an article on Bobby Chouinard! [Nov. '85 *MD]* I loved it. It is about time that Bobby receives the recognition he so well deserves. He is definitely one of the best drummers around today. He plays the drums the way they should be played: hard and powerful—not electronically programmed and flimsy. Billy Squier, don't ever let Mr. Chouinard out of your sight. Keep on rockin', Bobby: you're great!

Annette Doerp
Hampton, VA

CHRIS SLADE

Special thanks to Teri Saccone for the great article on Chris Slade in the October '85 *MD.* It's good to see Chris getting the recognition he has so richly deserved for so many years. I'm the percussion manager of American Music in Jacksonville, Florida, where the Firm kicked off the second leg of their U.S. tour. Chris and his drum tech Steve came into the store, and we swapped equipment tips and tuning techniques. Both gentlemen were great, and Chris was just as Teri wrote in the article—and then some. It was such a pleasure to spend a few hours with these two men who are so great in their individual fields. Thanks again to Teri and to *MD* for such a great job.

Kenny Holton
Jacksonville, FL

BERNARD PURDIE

I have just finished reading *The Big Beat,* an excellent book written by Max Weinberg. Among the 14 highly respected drummers interviewed in the book was Bernard Purdie. During his interview, Purdie claims to have substituted for Ringo on as many as 21 of the Beatles' early recordings! Although he refuses to name the tracks (saying he was paid to keep his mouth shut), Purdie contends that Beatle manager Brian Epstein brought completed recordings to New York in 1964-'65, and that Purdie replaced Ringo's drum parts with his own. Interviewer Weinberg appears unconvinced by Purdie's claims, but does not pursue the matter, leaving it instead for the reader to decide.

Now I see that Purdie has made similar claims in his interview in your November issue. It seems, though, that he's forgotten a few of his facts over the years, and this is where the bottom really falls out of his story. During the period referred to by Purdie, the Beatles were recording on two-track tape machines. Unlike today's 24-track recordings where the drums are isolated on several tracks, in '64-'65, it was necessary to record the entire band "live" onto one or two tracks. In other words, the drums were inseparable from the rest of the instruments and could not possibly have been replaced. With machine-to-machine "dubbing" additional drums could conceivably have been added to the recordings, but then two drumkits would clearly be heard, and there is no evidence of this on any Beatles recordings.

I'm getting tired of attempts by Purdie and others to discredit Ringo. It's time history noted the fact that Ringo is a unique and inventive musician, and an inspiration to many of us.

Jim Vallance
Songwriter/Bryan Adams Band
Vancouver, Canada

Here I sit, enjoying two records: *Bernard Purdie: Shaft* and *Soul Is . . . Pretty Purdie.* These were given to me by my drum teacher, John Riley, to study and enjoy. Boy, does Bernard know how to groove! I thoroughly enjoyed your write-up on this great and talented man. I found this article very interesting, and it gave me very good insight into what Bernard Purdie is all about. Thank you!

Sue Redfern
Hudson, MA

ED SOPH

Implications may be drawn from remarks about the University of Bridgeport in my interview [Nov. '85 *MD]* which should not be drawn. I taught there in 1978/79 and my remarks have no relevance to the program and students of 1985,

Ed Soph
North Haven, CT

Three thousand and one cheers for Ed Soph. It was a fantastic article. Ed tells it like it is. I also liked his opinion of *MD.* It is also mine, right to the very last word.

Chuck Ankrom
Columbus, OH

RESPONSE TO QUINN

I'm a little upset with Ed Quinn due to his letter in your October '85 issue. I love the way Buddy Rich and Louie Bellson play, and I love players like John Bonham and Ginger Baker as well. This, I believe, is what *MD* is all about. For someone to badmouth a great drummer like Mickey Curry makes me wonder: Maybe Ed is one of those guys with a great single-stroke roll, but who wouldn't know a groove if it bit him! I've seen Mickey Curry's name on a couple of gold records. Ed who?

Dave Olivier
Bethpage, NY

In your October issue, Mr. Ed Quinn makes some negative remarks about Mickey Curry, including "how could he call himself a drummer when he just wants to bash?" If Mr. Quinn had read the article a little more carefully, he would've understood that that was when Mickey was a teenager. Also, the fact that Mickey never did his lessons and never studied doesn't seem to have affected his incredible drumming as far as my ears are concerned. About his not being able to keep time without a machine: At least he's concerned about good time. I haven't seen him on stage with earphones, and he keeps steady time then. About tuning: Just because you're a drummer doesn't mean you have to tune your own drums. If you have a good understanding with your drum tech, he'll know what you expect of him. In regard to liking the way double bass drums look: From what I read, it seemed that the looks only drew Mickey's attention to them. After seeing Mickey live, I'd say he seems to have learned how to play them well. And as for *MD* devoting nine pages to Mickey, I'm sure if the people at *MD* felt Ed Quinn was as fine, energetic, and powerful a drummer as Mickey Curry is, they'd devote nine pages to him, too.

David Wilson
Lansing, MI

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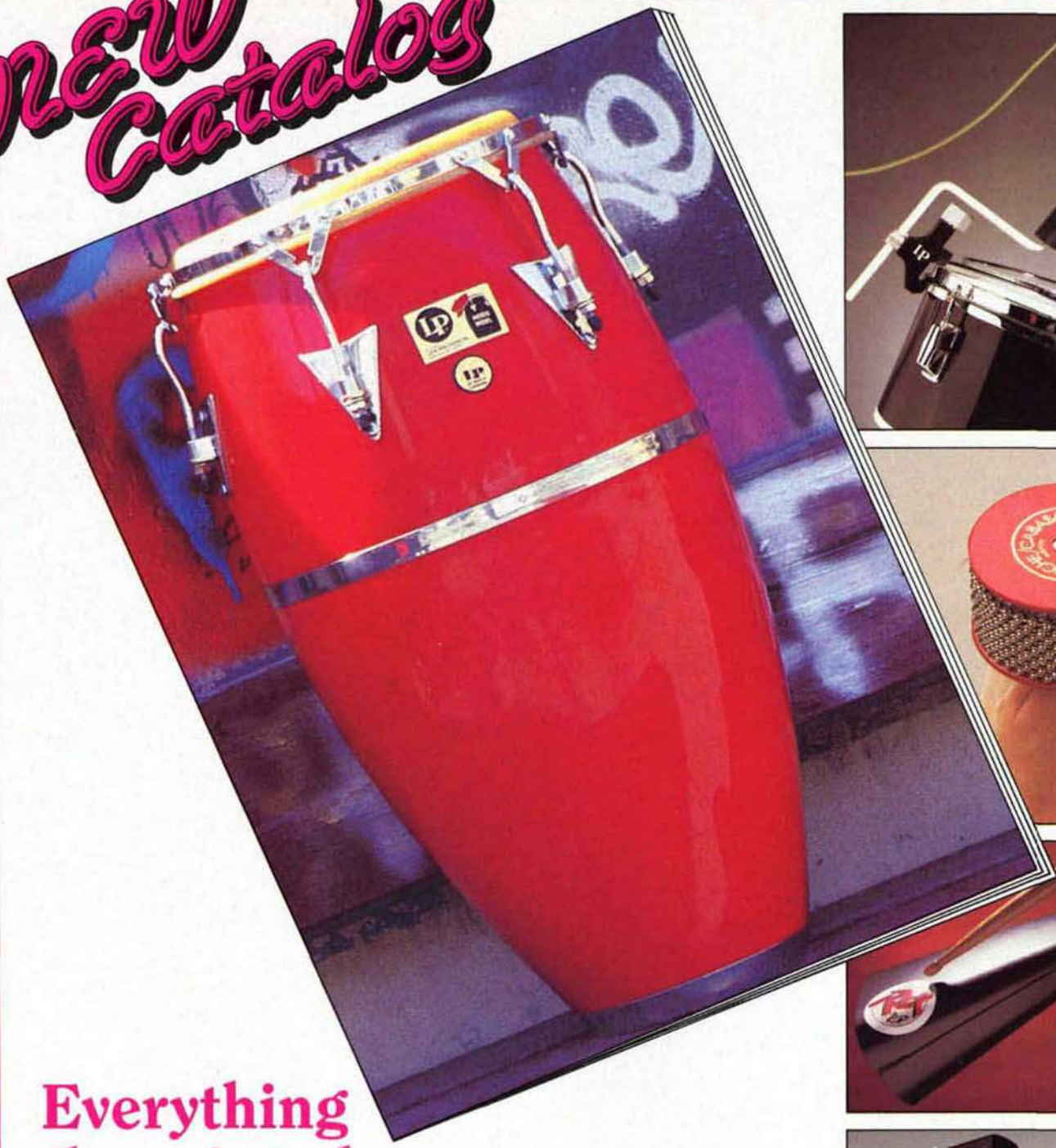

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Jim Blair is pleased to have joined Animotion as a full member of the group. Currently on tour, Jim says, "I like the road. As far as I'm concerned, playing comes before anything. Being on the road is demanding, though, because you have to play under any circumstance, like when you're tired or not feeling well. When you're doing 28 cities, you have to watch your health. I watch what I eat, I don't drink too much, I don't do any drugs, and *I* try to stay in shape. I don't jog too much, but when we stay anyplace where there's a gym, I'll work out. As a drummer, if you're down, the whole band is going to be down. If I'm tired when I walk on the stage, the whole band is going to be tired. My job is to stay on top of it as much as possible so that, when I walk out on stage, everybody can feel the energy from me."

Last year, Jim clocked a lot of miles with Shalamar, the group he had been with since the beginning of 1984. He plans to continue working with them when Animotion's schedule permits. He should be on Shalamar's next release, which will be his first Shalamar record. He joined the group after their last album had been cut with a drum machine. "Coming in and duplicating a machine was exactly what my job was. I had to create perfect time, so everyone could groove the way the machine did. We pulled it off. We didn't use a machine with me, so I did all the parts myself. It was actually fun. It was kind of challenging to walk out every night after five months of playing the same songs and remembering to play them at exactly the same tempo. Everyone is used to the way the album is, so I was just locking into that pocket and imitating the machines, although I certainly tried to make it feel more human. Sometimes I used more cymbals than they did on the record, because cymbals don't always sound great on drum machines. We also added accents to make it a bit more showy." — *Robyn Flans*

Photo by Richard Laird

Billy Cobham is back! He's back in a few ways. His most recent album *Warning,* on GRP Records, is riding high on the jazz charts, and after five years of living in Switzerland, Billy has moved back to the States. "Moving to Europe was, in a word, anomie. I felt I needed to build up my career in Europe, and by living there, I could do just that." The culture shock of the move did affect Billy. "I found that I could concentrate on my playing much more, but for some reason, I was having trouble writing. On some of my more recent albums, the material wasn't all written by me. Only after living over there for a couple of years did I start to feel that I had something to say compositionally." The *Warning* album attests to Billy's revitalized composing skills, containing some of Billy's best works. They combine his Latin and jazz roots with a European complexity. According to Billy, "The tunes are complete compositions as opposed to songs that have a head and soloing over the changes. I wanted to write material that featured the band as a total unit. I wanted to have both full compositions along with tunes that we could just go ahead and blow on."

As for Billy's playing, the energy, power, and excitement are all still there, and on the new album, digital technology has helped to reveal all of these qualities. "If you have confidence in what you want to play and in what you want others to hear, recording digitally is fantastic! The separation is amazing. Everything I played on the album was so clearly audible, from the loudest *forte* to the softest *piano.* It's all there." Besides the recording, the mixing of the album was an experience. "Mixing digital can be interesting. You're bombarded with sounds that are so pure that they affect your perspective. Anyone who has spent any time mixing analog knows that, after a while, your ears become fatigued and you just can't concentrate. Well, with digital, that happens much faster." All of the painstaking work has paid off, with the sound of the album, and the drum sound in particular, being excellent.

Currently, Billy's new band is in the midst of a tour that has covered the U.S. and is now in Europe. The instrumentation of the band includes a percussionist, which Billy hasn't used in a while. "I find that, when I don't have a percussionist, I tend to play much busier because I want to hear that Latin influence in the music. Now that I have Sa Davis with me, we can work with each other, and that frees me up so I can play more simply and punctuate certain things."

After this tour, Billy is planning the release of his next album. He will continue to tour and perform clinics. Since he is living in the States again, we should be seeing and hearing from him more. Billy *is* back. —*William F. Miller.*

1984 and 1985 were busy years **for John Spooner, who** worked with such notable performers as Shirley MacLaine, Anthony Newley, Joel Grey, Diahann Carroll, and Vic Damone. Also, for the latter half of 1985, John played drums for the hit show *Sweet Charity,* which opens on Broadway soon.

"It's really one of the toughest shows I've ever played. It's very demanding, and not just playingwise, because Shirley's show is demanding in that way. This show is demanding because of the concentration required. You can't take your mind off it for a second. Otherwise, you'll miss something. Shirley's show, on the other hand, is a lot of heavy, heavy playing. She wants to hear the drums very solid acoustically behind her, not through monitors.

"With *Sweet Charity,* the choreography is very much as it was conceived 20 years ago. We've updated some of the grooves and a couple of the songs, but that's all. It was fabulous working with Bob Fosse. He's absolutely brilliant. He knows how to direct people, and his choreography is not just people kicking their legs all over the stage. The dancing revolves around the story and the plot, and it's there for a reason. He gives every single person his or her own space, and a purpose for being on stage. Fosse knows accents, and what's possible and what's not possible. You can explain things to him in musical and drumming terms, and he understands. The things he wants make real sense. Dancers and drummers have to have a good relationship because they dance to accents. The music comes into it, but mainly they dance to accents. Shirley dances to accents. If I miss just one accent, the whole show is ruined, as far as she is concerned."

Currently, John is working on the Broadway opening for *Sweet Charity,* although he plans to leave the show after working with it for the better part of a year. "You can get burned out working on something for that long. And you do get a little bored, but what I try to do every day is get some good exercise. I find that exercise and playing the drums go very well together. I run five miles and sometimes even ten every day. That really helps me keep my head together, even more so than practicing. It

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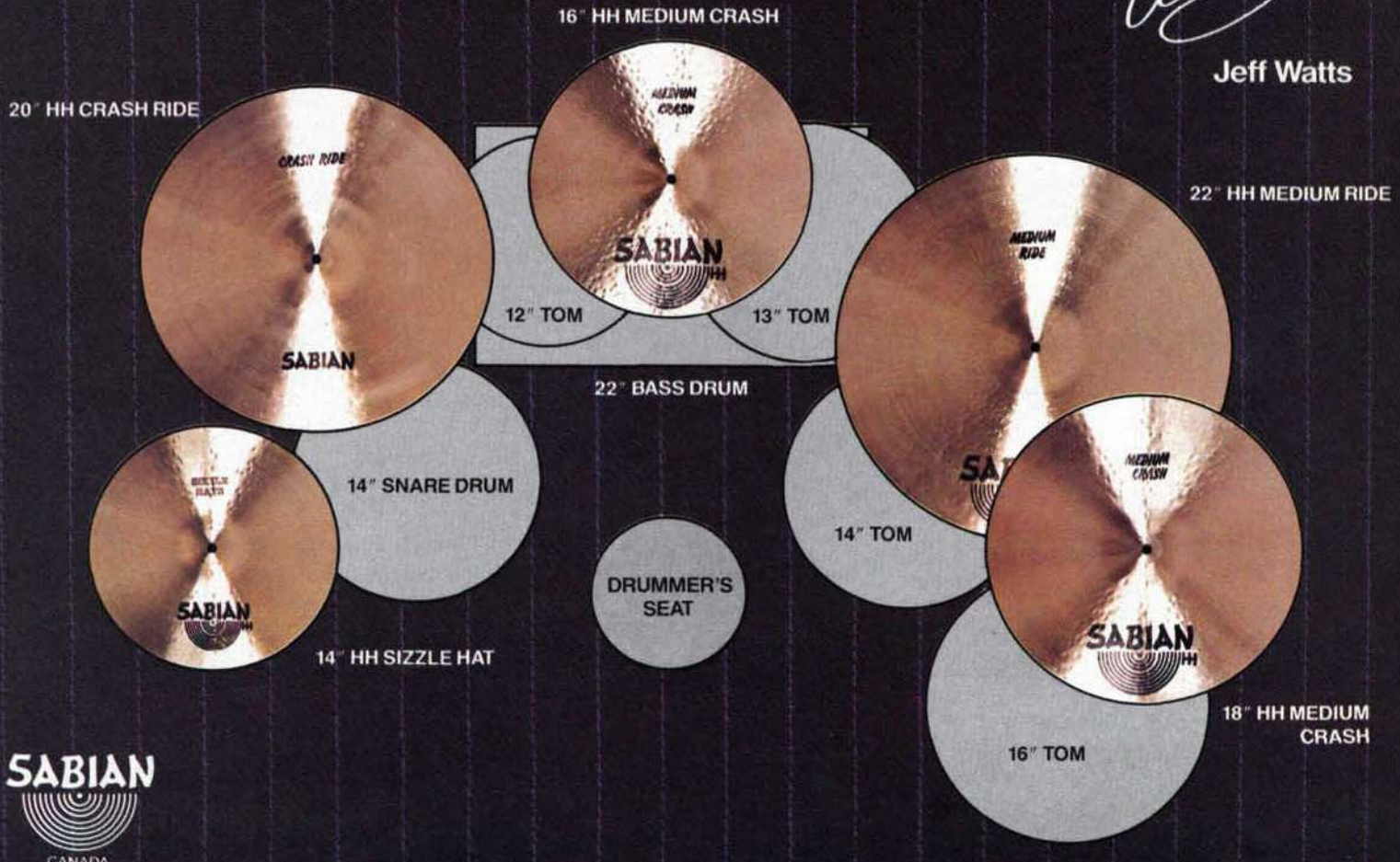

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gives me energy, it gives me direction, and it clears my head. It keeps my interest up, also. When you're on the road, it can be very, very boring, and you can get into that cocktail syndrome after the gig. I try not to do that anymore, and make a special effort to run at a certain time of the day and to plan my day. Running is a great way to see the city you're in, too." — *Robyn Flans*

Photo by Lissa Wales

Terry Williams is still on the road with Dire Straits, currently in Europe and Australia. In fact, the group hopes to return to America for a second time this year. It all started in September, 1984, when the band recorded *Brothers In Arms in* Monserratt. From there, they went to Yugoslavia to rehearse. "The monetary system there is different, and nobody wants their money. We were doing four gigs there, so we decided to use the money from the gigs and do rehearsals there before the tour. It was great because there was nothing to do there but rehearse."

Of the musical requirements of Dire Straits, Terry says, "The music requires a lot of dynamics and really keeping the tempos together, because there's so much going on over the top, with keyboards, guitars and such. The dynamics are really important, which is the good thing about playing in Dire Straits. You go from quiet to loud, fast to slow, rock to jazz. It's all in there. The show is paced well. We start off on a high, and it goes to mellow in the middle. Then, it starts going up again, until we reach a peak. That gives us a break in the middle to get our breath back." —*Robyn Flans*

Armand Grimaldi had a tough, but coveted, decision to make last year. He was working with Chaka Khan when he was offered the drum seat with David Sanborn. "Deciding between the two was quite difficult," Armand admits. "It was just the idea that I always wanted to play with Dave Sanborn, and I had the opportunity. I'd listened to his music for years and always thought I would be right for it. I don't know if I can put that into concrete terms. There were just feel things that I understood that he was doing. As it turned out, all the things that I thought would apply were real different. He was going for a different sound. He wanted something that was more high energy on stage than any of the recordings, and some of the comments he would make would be, 'Play more on top—more edgy.' He wanted that intensity. But I really wanted to play with him, because whenever I would listen to something he played on, I was very inspired to practice or play.

"Chaka is another inspiring artist," he says, adding that after the Sanborn gig, he returned to work with her. "It's a different kind of music, and I like both kinds. With Chaka, it's funk and playing a really strong groove. I love that. 'Don't play your fancy fills' is kind of what she is all about. That's so unimportant in most kinds of music, anyway. It's real powerful, and there's a lot of energy generated from her and that whole music.

"I think the key to any kind of artist or music is playing what is needed. So many people go into an audition armed with all of their technical abilities, because they all want to be like Vinnie [Colaiuta]. There's only one Vinnie, and there will always be only one Vinnie. There are people with chops, but they will never be him, and they're all trying to be him. So they come into an audition and want to do all this fancy stuff, but it may not be right. Vinnie was right [for the Chaka gig], because he is amazing, and he plays a great groove. These other people probably don't know what a great groove is. It's so important to understand that, and I don't think you can practice that. You either have that in your body or you don't. Dave was very similar to that. He wanted someone who could play a groove, but he also wanted someone who could take it somewhere else. I try to be as well rounded as I can." —*Robyn Flans*

Sieve Jordan is on Neil Young's upcoming album. **Vinnie Colaiuta** worked on Stevie Nicks' long awaited LP. **Craig Krampf** on Dwight Twilley's and Randy Hall's upcoming album. **Robert Aguilar** is on Diego Verdageur's newest album, released last month. **Cubby O'Brien** has been busy as usual working with Connie Francis, Joel Grey, Andy Williams, Suzanne Sommers, and currently with Juliette Prowse. Look for a new Van Halen album out this month, with **Alex Van Halen** on drums and new frontman Sammy Hagar. **Keith John** has been working with the Ventures. **Jonathan Moffett** recorded two tracks with Evelyn Champagne King. He is also on Laura Palace's single, "I Keep Forgetting," plus background vocals. Jonathan has also been working on Madonna's new album, playing drums and singing background. He was also on a recently aired episode of *The A-Team* playing behind Isaac Hayes and Rick James. **Kenwood Dennard** has two main projects currently in the works. One is the Meta-Rhythmic Orchestra, a one-man band combining numerous drums and percussion, keyboards and vocals, which will begin its concert tour on the West Coast sometime this month. Also, he recently recorded the debut album for Turn of the Century, featuring John Scofield, Anthony Jackson, and himself. Look for **Warren Benbow** on Teruo Nakamura's *Superfriends* (which is also the name of the group), which also includes **Steve Gadd. Pat Matelloto** has been touring with Mr. Mister. **Pat Torpey** has been on the road with John Parr. You can see **Fred Young** in the film *Sweet Dreams,* in a role opposite Jessica Lange who stars as Patsy Cline. **Marvin Kanarek** has been doing a lot of *Linn 9000* programming for Dusty Wakeman, Charlie Brown's Restaurant jingle, Clarion Radio commercial, and a film entitled *King Of The Streets.* He plays live drums on an EP for Charles Duncan and on a track for the Valentine Brothers. **Sandy Gennaro** on Craaft's album. **Rod Morgenstein** has been playing with the Steve Morse Band, which is currently opening shows for Rush's American tour through the spring. **Neil Peart** is on the road with Rush. **Tony Thompson** is on Rod Stewart's recent release. **Kevan McKenzie** has recently been on the road with Dalbello. **Jimmie Fadden** in the studio with the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. Percussionist J. **Fred Brillhart,** who is also president of Fredrico Percussion, has recorded with Bo Diddley on an EP by Frank Davenport and Tongue 'N' Groove. Check out **Steve Smith's** new release *Global Beat.* You can also hear him on a new release by guitarist Tony MacAlpine. Smith is currently on a European tour with guitarist Torsten deWinkle, including percussionist Nippy Noya. Congratulations to Steve and his wife Susan on the birth of their daughter Elizabeth Ann. Also, congratulations to Monica and **Myron Grombacher** on the birth of their son Dylan Jesse. **Howard Joines** playing *Singing In The Rain* on Broadway. **Tom Moglovkin** with Model Citizen. — *Robyn Flans*

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ASK A PRO

NEIL PEART

Q. In your article in the December '82 *MD,* you mentioned how you've developed an idea using a triplet to begin a single-stroke roll, which in turn shifts the downbeat to the opposite hand. I've heard this effect in many of your fills, but cannot seem to grasp fully the concept of notating these fills while transcribing your songs. Could you please elaborate on this idea, and if possible, give an example?

Gene Brodeur
Marlboro, MA

A. Well, you had me on that one, so I consulted with my friend, Martin Deller, who is rather more expert at notation than I. Here are a few examples that we worked out on the tabletop and that he transcribed. The first one shows a simple example of the principle.

①

These patterns can be mixed and matched at will, since any odd *number of left-hand triplets will deliver your right hand to the crash cymbal on the 1. A good example of this pattern is the introductory fill into "Digital Man" on* our Signals *album.*

A paradiddle can also be used to shift the sticking back to the right, like this:

②

A wild interpretation of these ideas that I learned watching Terry Bozzio when he was with Frank Zappa, shifts the accents *In a triplet feel, but not the sticking (since what would be the double beat is omitted). It's tough to explain, but an example of where I have used this is in the first drum break in "YYZ." It goes like this:*

③

As you can see, the possibilities seem limitless, so it can keep you off the streets for a long time. Lots of drummers are doing great things lately in "The Wonderful World Of Triplets."

DANNY GOTTLIEB

Q. I saw you on stage with the Mahavishnu Orchestra in a great concert in Milan, Italy. Can you give me some suggestions for a good approach to practicing? Also, what type of grip do you recommend?

Luca Panaro
Saronno, Italy

A. The things that you practice depend on what your musical goals are, and how much time you have to devote to practicing every day. You have to decide for yourself what items are important, and work on what you need to. A serious student of the drums might take the following into consideration for a practice schedule: (1) technique; (2) time playing; (3) studying the master drummers in each idiom; (4) control of the instrument, including dynamics, physical movement, sound, tuning, posture; (5) study of ethnic music and the drummers of other cultures; (6) study of other percussion instruments; (7) keyboard, harmony, and theory; (8) reading; (9) classical percussion. The list could go on and on, and each of these items could be the focus of a lifetime of study. However, there are only so many hours in the day that you can practice, so again, you must decide what is important. One person might work mostly on coordination; someone else might work on perfecting a single-stroke roll. Someone else might be trying to play in a specific situation, such as a rock 'n' roll band, and have to focus principally on developing a strong 2 and 4 backbeat. I try to work on as wide a variety of things as possible, depending on my situation. On the road, it is hard to spend a lot of time at the drumset, so I practice technique on the pad. While traveling, I check out records, and transcribe solos. Recently, I've been trying to learn about Indian drumming, and I listen to those tapes and records whenever possible.

I'm lucky to have two great drum teachers—Joe Morello and Gary Chester—and I work on their material whenever possible. A good technical practice routine for Joe always includes exercises from George L. Stone's Stick Control, *and Joe's book,* Master Studies. *I will usually use the first three pages of* Stick Control fas *instructed by Joe) for a tremendous variety of exercises, to develop even strokes between the hands, and to develop each hand on its own. I love all of the exercises in* Master Studies, *and they are tremendously beneficial if you practice consistently with a metronome, as explained by Joe in the book. For warm-ups before a concert, I'll work on the "Stone Killer" exercise, and work it up with a metronome.*

As far as grip is concerned, the rule is to do whatever is the most comfortable for you. I play with both grips, although I practice mostly the traditional grip. I do this because I have much more control of dynamics with it. But that is an individual thing. I also like using the traditional grip because of the jazz drumming tradition. But when playing rock or Latin music, I flip the left stick over to the matched grip. I could use a lot more practice with that grip.

BOBBY RONDINELLI

Q. I would like to know the setup you used with Rainbow, and what you are using now.

Steve Franks
Wichita, KS

A. The set I used with Rainbow was a red Yamaha Recording Custom *kit, with special sizes. The bass drums were 15 x 24, the toms were 10 x 13 and 11x14, the floor toms were 17x 16 and 17x18, and the snare was a 7x14 wood model. The cymbal setup included 14" heavy hi-hats, a 22" heavy ride, 14", 21", 22" and two 19" crashes, 16" and 18" rides used as crashes, an 8" bell, and 20",* 22", *and 24" China types. All the cymbals were Paiste* 2002s. *I also used a 40" Paiste gong.*

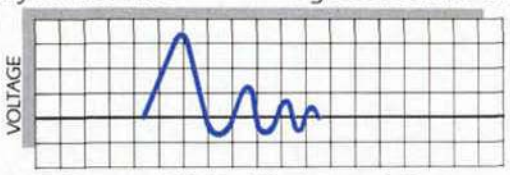
With my own new group—called Rondinelli—I'm using a black Yamaha Recording Custom *kit. The bass drums, floor toms, and snare are the same sizes as before; the racks are 12x 14 and 12x 15. I use Duraline heads on the bass drums, and I play with Nuwud synthetic sticks. The cymbal setup is basically the same, with the addition of a 20" China (under my 18" ride/crash) and a 16" China over my 22" China. It sounds like a lot of cymbals, but they're all set up in a pretty functional way, and when I'm sitting behind the set, it doesn't seem so complicated. I like cymbals; I think they're very visual. And my roadie, Timmy Kelly, keeps all my stuff in order for me.*

THE COMPLETE DRUM INTERFACE.

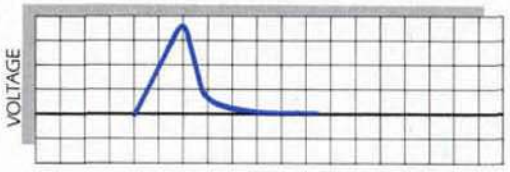
There are a lot of drum interfaces on the market that can do one or two things extremely well. However, no other drum interface comes close to matching the complete range of features found on the new MTM from Simmons.

MTM is an eight channel fully programmable interface unit that converts drum pad, tape or acoustic drum signals to trigger both MIDI and non-MIDI electronic sound sources under full dynamic control. Its signal processing capabilities are a result of extensive research and development by Simmons Electronics culminating in unique applications of existing interface technologies combined with totally new innovations.

Designed primarily for use with Simmons electronic percussion synthesizers, the MTM enhances the dynamic range and performance of the SDS5 and SDS7 by placing a computer between the drum pads and drum brain. MTM will also act as a fully assignable MIDI interface that can produce unlimited melodic, harmonic, tonal and rhythmic effects via drum pad triggering when used in conjunction with MIDI sound generators.



INPUT—Miked Acoustic Drum



OUTPUT—MTM to Sound Source

MTM has many other applications as well. For example, it can be used as an interface between acoustic and electronic drums, acoustic drums and MIDI equipped synthesizers or in the recording studio for converting audio signals on tape to MIDI code.

As the complete drum interface, MTM allows creative flexibility for programming several signal processing parameters, each of which is independently adjustable.

SIGNAL PROCESSING CAPABILITIES.

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Threshold, the dynamic level an incoming signal must reach before it is recognized as a trigger, is programmable for Absolute, Initial, Fractional and Cross Channel characteristics.

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With MTM's on-board microcomputer, dynamic enhancement of trigger signals is possible through velocity tracking, compression and expansion.

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MTM's MIDI capability is designed for full programmable implementation including note assignment, channel assignment as well as patch and program changes.

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Repeat Echo, Sequencing and Note Layering are just a few of the MTM's programmable on-board effects. Repeat Echo is a single note retriggering effect that is adjustable for echo decay and echo speed. The Sequencing function allows programming of sequences up to sixteen notes on each drum per program. Pitched and non-pitched chords under full dynamic control are made possible by MTM's Note Layering effect.

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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Have a problem? A question? Ask MD. Address all questions to: Modern Drummer, c/o It's Questionable, 870 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Questions cannot be answered personally.

Q. I recently purchased a 22" Paiste *Rude* crash/ride cymbal. I clean it every other day with a dry, clean towel. I know that Paiste has a cymbal cleaner of its own. Does the Paiste cleaner remove the wax coating of the cymbal? Also, do nylon-tipped sticks leave marks that are harder to remove than those left by wood-tipped sticks? Lastly, if a cymbal has a very sharp, rough edge at the top of the hole, which tears at the nylon parts of cymbal stands, is it wise to file the rough edges down—or would that be detrimental to the cymbal?

L.B.
Lewiston, ME

A. Paiste's Steve Ettleson informed us that Paiste's cleaner does in fact remove the wax coating from its cymbals, which is why the company recommends that you continue to towel-wipe your cymbal to keep it shiny as long as possible before *using the cleaner. The cleaner should only be used when the cymbal actually becomes dirty, with the type of stick marks you mention. Both wood- and nylon-tipped sticks will pick up dirt and grease from drumheads and transfer them to cymbals. It depends more on what type of dirt is on the head than on the type of stick tip. As for the rough edge on the hole in your cymbal, Steve recommends that you very carefully smooth it down, using wet sandpaper or emery cloth. Use a round or half-round file only if a point of metal actually extends out from the hole and the sandpaper cannot remove it. Do this very carefully, however, since a file can create gouges. You should definitely* not *use any power tools.*

Q. I recently found some interesting drums at a flea market. I paid $4.00 for a 3 1/2 x 13 1/2 brass-shelled snare, with a wide wooden rim. It appears to have the original goat skins on it, and the overall condition is good. I also purchased a 2 1/4 x 12 wood snare, and a 10 x 23 bass drum, both with original skins. All the drums were made by Lyon & Healy of Chicago. Can you tell me anything about them? Are they worth anything as collector's items? Additionally, I'd like to try using them in my setup, but could I get new heads for them?

M.B.
Talent, OR

A. We checked with drum historian Ken Mezines, who gave us the following reply: "You certainly got a good deal on those drums, which is good, because their value is not great. We have sold similar drums through my shop for decorative pieces. The bass drums make great coffee tables. Lyon & Healy drums are not particularly valuable as collector's items from a musical standpoint; they may be of interest to someone simply as historical curiosity pieces. If you wish to use the drums for playing, Remo will make new heads for you on a custom-order basis. However, you would have to send them either the shell or the hoop, or both, for each drum. You 'd have to check with them in advance about the cost."

Q. I have two questions for you. My first question is this: I am serious about purchasing a new or good used set. I have been playing on a five-piece set. What kind of experience do I need on my five-piece to move up to a seven- or eight-piece kit? Secondly, could you describe some of the advantages and disadvantages of owning a 24" bass drum, and what problems could arise from switching from a 22" to a 24"?

J.S.
Denver, CO

A. No particular "experience" is necessary to move up to a larger kit. What is needed is a musical approach, in order to use those extra pieces creatively. You'll naturally need the technical ability to get around the kit smoothly, but if you've been working on a five-piece kit, the addition of a few extra pieces should merely call for slight extensions of the movements you're used to making. You can give yourself a little inexpensive practice by imagining where the new pieces are going to be on your kit—and moving your existing drums to accommodate the "new" ones if necessary—and then doing some serious "air drumming." You may feel a bit silly at first, but you'll give yourself an idea of what it will feel like to play a larger kit. In that way, you can make sure you will be comfortable with the new pieces before you invest in them.

The advantages to be gained from a 24" bass drum over a 22" include a bigger sound, deeper pitch, and more volume (in an unmiked situation). Of course, those are only advantages if that's the sound you want from your bass drum. The disadvantages include the fact that 24" bass drums can be more difficult to tune, and their greater volume can be hard to control. They are not good all-purpose drums for those reasons. Since they are larger than a 22" drum, they take up more space in your vehicle and on stage, require a larger case, and could possibly affect your rack tom height. Heads for 24" drums are also more expensive than those for 22" drums.

Q. I love my drums and equipment very much, but I have a problem. I would like my drums to have a tight sound without a lot of ring to them. I have tried clear heads, but I went right through them. I found this was costing me, so I switched to *Pinstripes* and I'm still not satisfied. What can I do?

R.M.
Wellesley, MA

A. It sounds as if you have two *problems. You need a head with endurance, and you need to control ring. You may be on the right track endurancewise with a* Pinstripe, *which is a double-ply head comparable in weight to Remo's* Emperor. *But if you are still not satisfied with the sound due to too much ring, you should consider an external method of damping the ring out of the head. Using self-muffling heads like* Pinstripes *or* CS *heads can only achieve so much, since the muffling device (the glue ring on the* Pinstripe *or the black dot on the* CS) *is still an integral part of the head, and vibrates with it. This is also a problem with tape put right on the head. An external method—such as a clamp-on external felt muffler or muffling rings (either a commercial product or one cut from an old head) interferes with the vibrations independently, thereby cutting down on the ring more dramatically. Commercial muffling rings are available from Remo (*Muff'ls), *Noble & Cooley (*Zero Rings) *and Groove Tubs (*Flat Rings); *external clamp-on mufflers are available from almost every drum company.*

Q. What is the difference in the sound and tones of a wood-shell snare drum versus a metal shell? Does one have advantages that the other does not? Which is most preferred by percussionists in general?

C.C.
St. Charles, MO

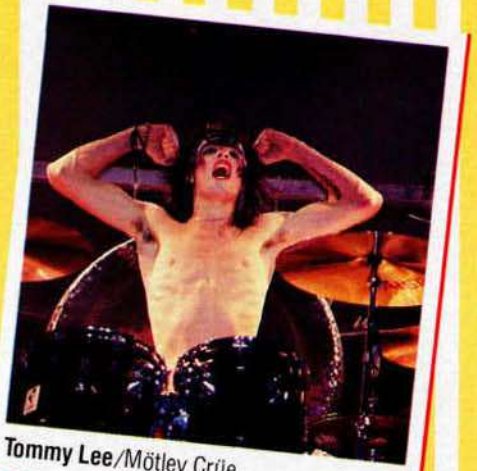
A. To answer your last question first, the choice of snare shell type is one of the most personal any drummer has to make, since snare sound is a fundamental element of a drummer's overall musical identity. We have no statistics on which type is preferred by most drummers. As a matter of fact, most top drummers we've interviewed over the years—especially studio drummers—have both kinds of snares, and will use them interchangeably according to their musical requirements.

A great deal of any snare drum's sound depends on tuning, but a few general comparisons between wood and metal shells can be made. Wood is usually considered to produce a warmer, darker tone than metal, with less ring from the shell itself. For that reason, wood drums are often used for recording, where a very controlled sound is desired. Conversely, metal shells are generally thought to be brighter, with more resonance and thus more projection than wood (all other factors being equal). Metal snare drums are popular with some rock players for that reason. Metal shells are also thought to be a bit more sensitive to snare vibration, and thus many symphonic snare drummers will use metal drums of thin or moderate shell depth when playing delicate passages.

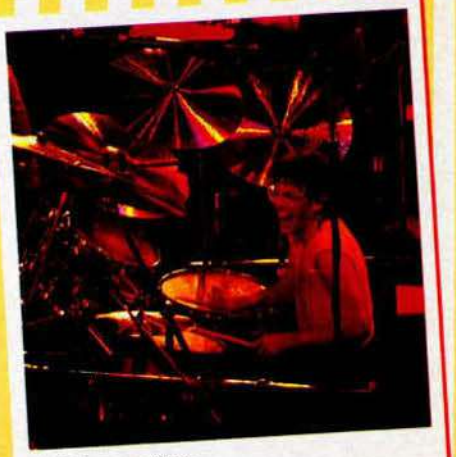
PAISTE... Sound is Everything

Michael Shrieve/Independent

Ian Paice/Deep Purple



Tommy Lee/Mötley Crüe



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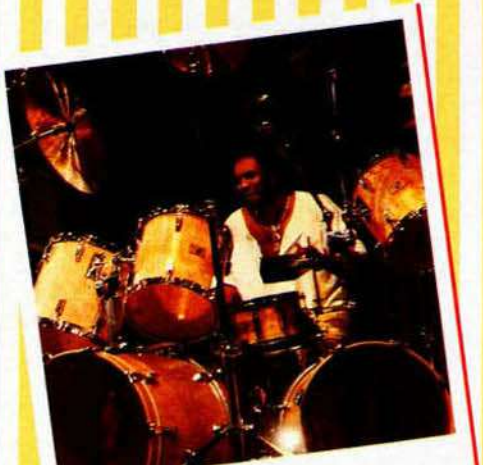
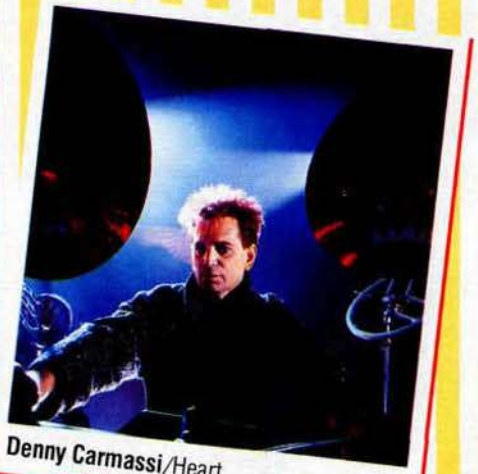


R. Shannon Jackson
The Decoding Society



Denny Carmassi/Heart

Gina Schock/Formerly: The Go Go's

Alex van Halen/Van Hagar

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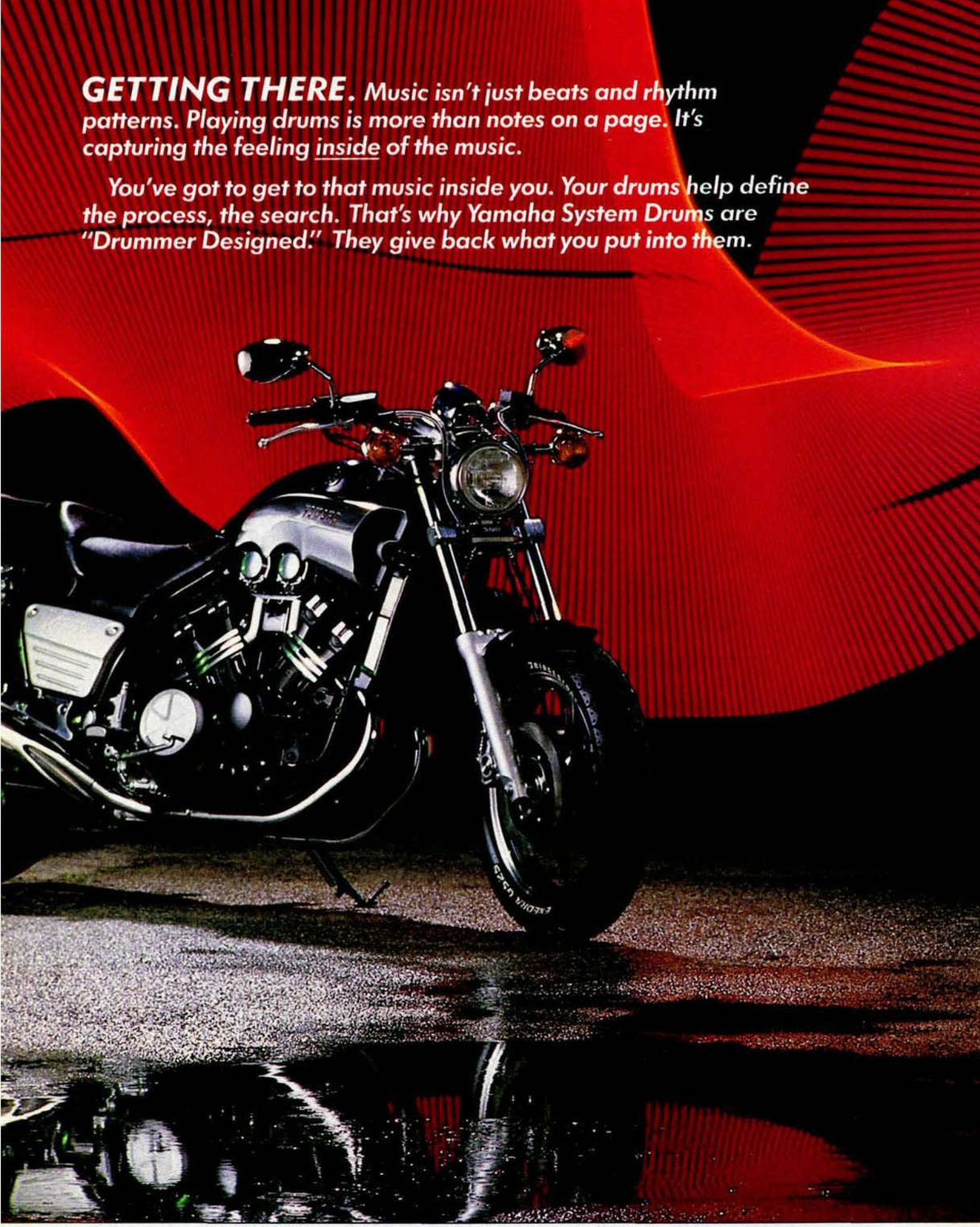
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YAMAHA®

roy haynes

by Jeff Potter

THE bus is waiting. Louis Armstrong's big band is ready to depart. The drummer has become ill, and a last-minute substitute is needed for one week. It is 1946, and Roy Haynes has been hanging at the right place in Harlem to make the connection. Just out of his teens, Roy already has a strong word-of-mouth reputation among musicians, so Armstrong takes him on. Roy steps aboard for the week-long journey—no rehearsals, no drum charts. He will just get on the first bandstand and swing Satchmo's big band. Under these circumstances, it would be quite understandable for a musician to be a little nervous, or perhaps downright . . .

"Scared? No, I was never scared. That word was never in my vocabulary. I was already with Luis Russell's big band and had experience playing shows. What was there to be afraid of?"

Roy doesn't answer defensively to my cold-feet question. He is just genuinely surprised. "But after all," I offer cautiously, "you *were* quite young." Slouched down in his living room easy chair with a comfortably cocked baseball cap and legs raised up on a footstool, Roy suddenly sits erect. "You just come in like a little man and do the job. I wouldn't have accepted it if I thought I was going to be afraid. I knew there were going to be new things, but I just prepared myself for that. I was a Boy Scout when I was 12 years old. The motto was 'Be Prepared,' " he laughs.

"The first trumpet player in the band was named Fats Ford," Roy continues. "The first trumpet would usually sit on the left-hand side of the drummer. He would tell me what was coming up eight bars ahead before we played the arrangement. I would just listen to him, and go ahead and play the arrangements.

"A lot of big bands in those days didn't have drum charts. Drummers would make their own charts. Louis Armstrong's band didn't have drum charts during the time I was with him. In Duke's band, not only the drummer, but the *band* often wouldn't even be reading music. Either they remembered a lot or he would just tell them what to hit. Those guys in the band were amazing. Most of the players at that time weren't fortunate enough to have gone to music school like some of the ones today who have studied and can read anything. At that time, your school was playing with the band—learning with them. That's where I got my experience.

"I happened to be at 126th Street and Eighth Avenue. That's where all the greatest musicians in the *world* would be. I used to go there to see buddies. A lot of bands used to leave from there at the Hotel Braddock—big bands. Armstrong's bus was there ready to leave, and I happened to have time off from Luis Russell's band. I left with Armstrong, and went down South to play in tobacco warehouses and places like that. All you had to do was swing, man, and play with some feeling—back up the solos and shade. Playing loud and soft was called shading. Most of it came naturally to me. I had ears. I could hear anything."

Roy tackled big jobs when he was young, but he certainly wasn't green. Born in the Roxbury section of Boston on March 13, 1926, Roy honed his craft with Boston-based jazz notables such as bandleader Sabby Lewis, saxman Pete Brown, and trumpeters Frankie Newton and Felix Barbozza (Phil Edmund). If Boston nightlifers diverted their glance from a showgirl's kick long enough, they might have glimpsed an eager, underaged drummer in their midst.

"I used to play at Little Dixie in Boston, which is now Wally's. As a teenager, I played with several bands, and we used to play a floor show with dancing girls and all. There were some great show drummers in Boston. There was a guy by the name of Bob Eliot. All he used was a snare drum and a cymbal at a place called Izzy Ortz's, a fabulous place where all the sailors used to hang out during World War II. They would start the music at 1:00 in the afternoon and go until 1:00 in the morning. The bands would take shifts. Bob was a hell of a show drummer. I used to sit and listen to this guy, and then I played the intermission. When that show came off, I would go up with a trio and play. So I had all kinds of experience with shows in Boston, even before I came to New York."

Bandleader Pete Brown was so impressed with the young drummer that he made a special effort to ensure that Roy worked legally. Trekking over to see the head of the Boston school board, Pete got clearance for the gifted young player to work in the clubs pending that he wouldn't touch the drinks.

Years later, Boston officially honored their native-son-made-good when the Boston Jazz Society sponsored Roy Haynes Day in 1978. Papa Jo Jones,

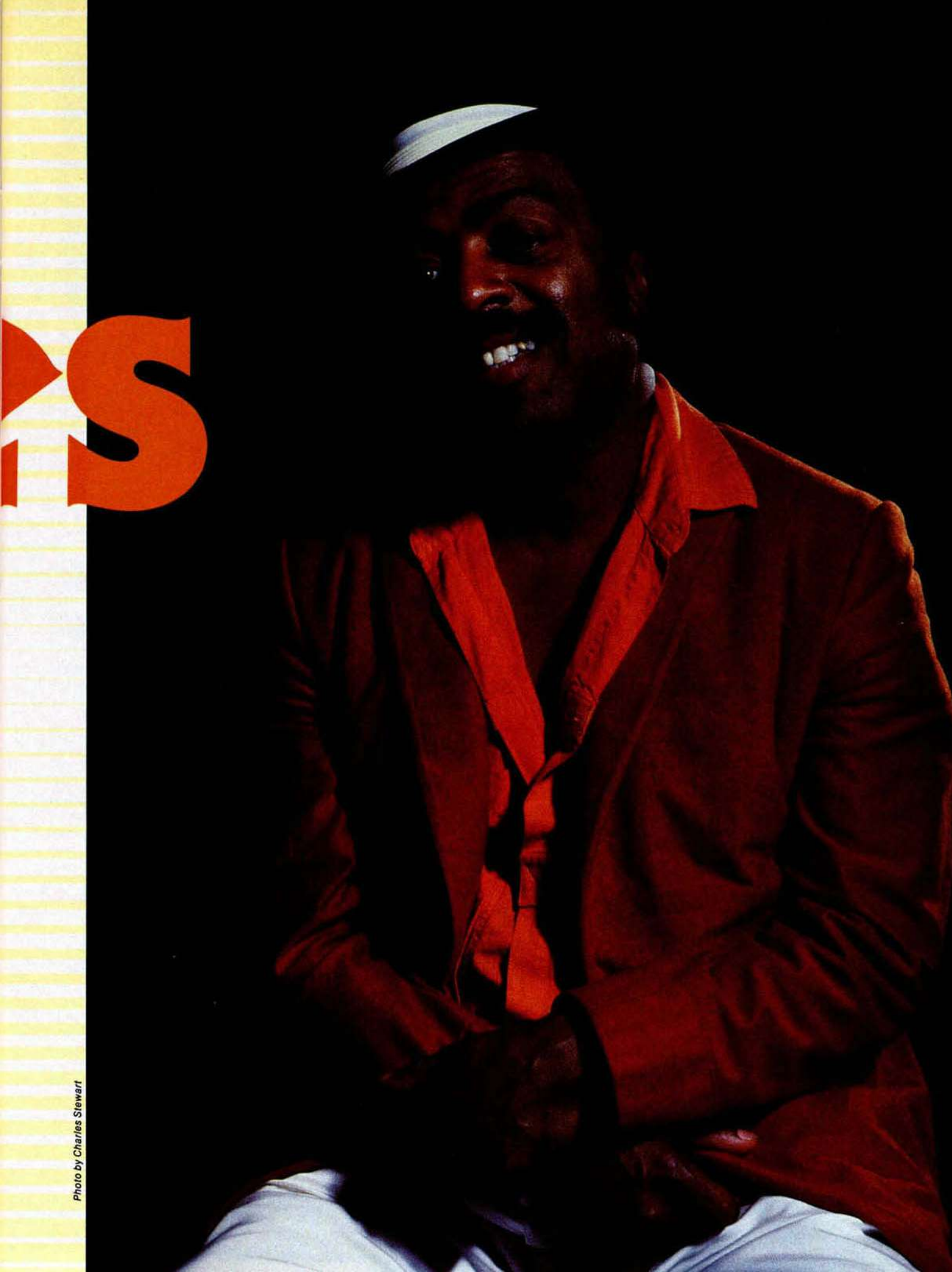


Photo by Charles Stewart

Joe Morello and Roy Haynes

Photo by Rick Mattingly

one of Roy's primary influences, proudly attended the ceremony, and speakers included Alan Dawson and Billy Taylor. On that day, an annual Roy Haynes scholarship was established for the benefit of promising music students. Jo Jones's presence was a special honor to Roy. "Younger drummers who never got to see Papa Jo play," Roy says, "missed the treat of their lives." Like so many jazz drummers of his generation, Roy was influenced by Jones from an early age.

"Jo Jones had a feeling—a looseness. He had a happy sound. He was something to watch, especially with a big band like Basie's. That was *it*\ When I was about 16 years old, I would go to the RKO theater in Boston to see him. When he started his solo, it was something special—different. It wasn't about playing fast. It was that warm sound. He 'invented' the sock cymbal. The way he played it was beautiful to listen to and watch. He didn't have to play a solo; just a two-bar break was beautiful."

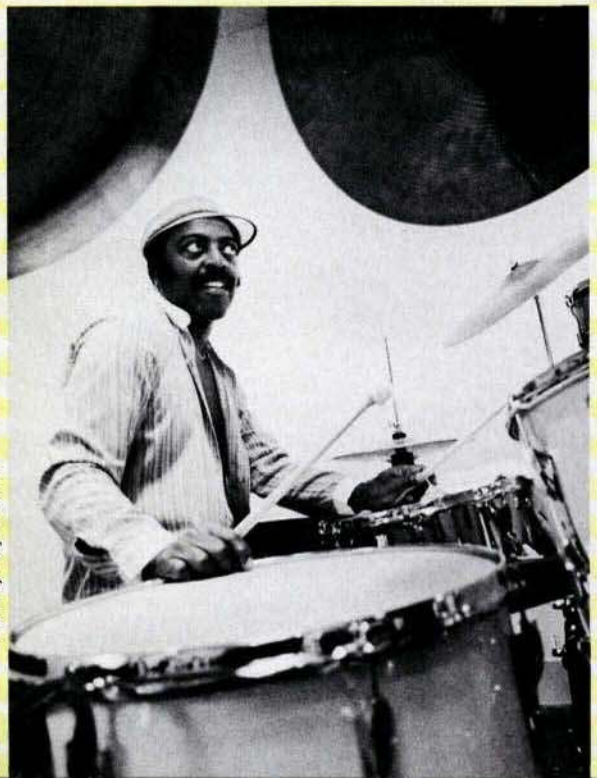


Photo by Veryl Oakland

Behind the set, Roy also has a looseness in his limbs and a physical quality of relaxed confidence. Not surprisingly, this quality carries beyond the set: in his walk, his talk, his smile, and his humor.

The road from playing floor shows to performances at the White House and in the court of the King and Queen of Thailand has been a long one. Roy's hometown tribute was well deserved. Ironically, the city that honored him was a town with segregated black and white musicians' unions at the time Roy joined. A notice reached Roy in 1945 through the black union informing the young drummer that Luis Russell wanted him to join his big band. With Russell's band, Roy got a taste of the traveling life in a big band bus. The segregated status of the union in his own hometown only mildly foreshadowed the injustices awaiting black musicians on the road during the '40s.

"Boston was different when I grew up," Roy recalls. "Now you hear about all the problems in South Boston over the past few years. But I had never been down South. I hadn't known that everything was segregated until I went below the Mason-Dixon line with Luis Russell's band. Even in Roxbury, it was different. To the right of our house were white French Canadian people, on the left side were Irish people—the Kellys—and across the street was a Jewish synagogue. And, man, I was involved in *all* of that, [laughs] But when you went to Miami or even New Orleans, you had to stay in *your* hotel on *your side* of town. Man, it's *emotional* talking about that. It's hard. Talking about that is like reliving it."

Roy shakes his head in disbelief over the surge of memories. Then his recollections jell, and he draws a positive overview from the memories of tribulation: "But, you see, it's an advantage in the music field that you get a chance to see more, experience more, and live more. I could write a book."

Settling in New York in 1945, Roy wasted no time in hopping the subway to 52nd Street, where he would listen to musical favorites that he had enjoyed on records: jazz pioneers such as Charlie Parker, Art Tatum, and Dizzy Gillespie. After two years with Russell, Roy landed a gig with sax giant Lester Young. During these years, New York was the undisputable mecca of jazz. The clubs and ballrooms were in their jazz heyday. Jazz buffs could club-hop the 52nd Street area and catch a cast of musical legends all within a few blocks. Roy found himself smack in the center of the City's creative circles. In his first week with Lester Young during October 1947, Roy could barely believe his fortune to find himself playing Town Hall with the sad-eyed saxman and with vocalist Billie Holiday. An engagement at the Savoy Ballroom with Young also began at that time.

"The time with Lester Young was beautiful," Roy smiles. "He was very sensitive about drummers. I stayed with him for two years. The only reason I left was that he went with Norman Granz's Jazz At The Philharmonic in 1949, and the band was off for a while. That's when I started playing on 52nd

Street with different people. He never told me what to play. He was thrilled with my playing the first time I played with him."

Highly syncopated and aggressively driving, Roy's drumming fit in perfectly with the younger generation that was shaking up jazz. He fell into the circle of New York players that formed the nucleus of bebop. "We weren't calling it 'bop' then," Roy stresses. "It was just the music we were playing." A famous photograph from that period, shot at the Open Door, shows Roy, Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk, and Charles Mingus cramped onto a small bandstand. The photo captures one night's entertainment at one small New York club. But the collective, far-reaching impact suggested by the picture is staggering. More than just a band, each musician represents a major influence on the history of jazz.

"I knew about Charlie Parker even before I came to New York. A saxophone-player friend from out West used to tell me about him. Finally, the record 'Groovin' High' came out. Of course, I had heard Charlie Parker on the Jay McShann records in the early '40s. But I hadn't really settled in with him until 'Groovin' High.' When I would go to 52nd Street, I would listen to Charlie Parker with Dizzy and Max Roach in the band.

"I started with Parker in the fall of 1949 at The Three Deuces on 52nd Street. Max had been his drummer, but he left to start his own band. I replaced him. I continued with Parker up until 1952 and then periodically after that. I had already played with Miles Davis by that time. In 1949, I played with Miles' first group when he left Charlie Parker. We started at a club called Soldier Meyers' in Brooklyn. Miles always used to say that Charlie Parker stole his drummer.

"I opened Birdland up in December of 1949 with Charlie Parker. Monte Kay booked the musicians for the club. One rhythm section would have to play about 45 minutes with Bird, and then play a short set with someone else such as Stan Getz or Harry Belafonte. It worked out so that, naturally, the club saved money. But it was a hell of an experience at that time to do all those things.

"There was a midget by the name of Pee Wee Marquett, who was the host of Birdland. He also collected the tickets at the door. He would introduce the groups. You may have heard him introducing the band on some records. He had a very high voice. When you walked into the club to play for the evening, Pee Wee would hand you a slip of paper with the time schedule of your sets. The sets would vary on different nights. Sometimes there would be two or maybe three groups within a night. Some nights you would have to play five sets.

"During the earlier days, a few special people would occasionally sit in. Billie Holiday sometimes sat in. One time, Oscar Peterson sat in when he first came in from Canada. He was getting ready to appear at Carnegie Hall and was a new young star. When I was with Sarah Vaughan, it was different. She didn't necessarily play five sets when she performed.

"In Birdland, they had the section they called 'the bleachers' for the youngsters under drinking age. They sold malted milks and ice cream. You could sit there if you just wanted to listen but didn't want to drink. When it first opened, you could go in for 98 cents and stay all night. The music went from 9:00 or 10:00 until 4:00 in the morning.

"The room was a basement that had good live sound, especially for a room with a low ceiling. Because it was named Birdland, after Charlie Parker, they had live birds in cages when it first opened up. All the birds died from so much smoke and no sun.

"I had a lot of great nights there: opening up with Bird, of course, playing there in the '60s with Coltrane, and also performing with my own groups. One of my highlights was playing there with my trio featuring Phineas Newborn. He was all over that piano. Phineas had that rhythm thing—very percussive. The notes were sharp—hittin'. It gave me something to play with. We played well together; we had a nice rapport. But the years I remember about Birdland with the most fondness were the '40s and '50s. During that time, there was a lot of love. Playing in New York then was like a dream."

The dream was made from the stuff of fine music, but also from the awareness of

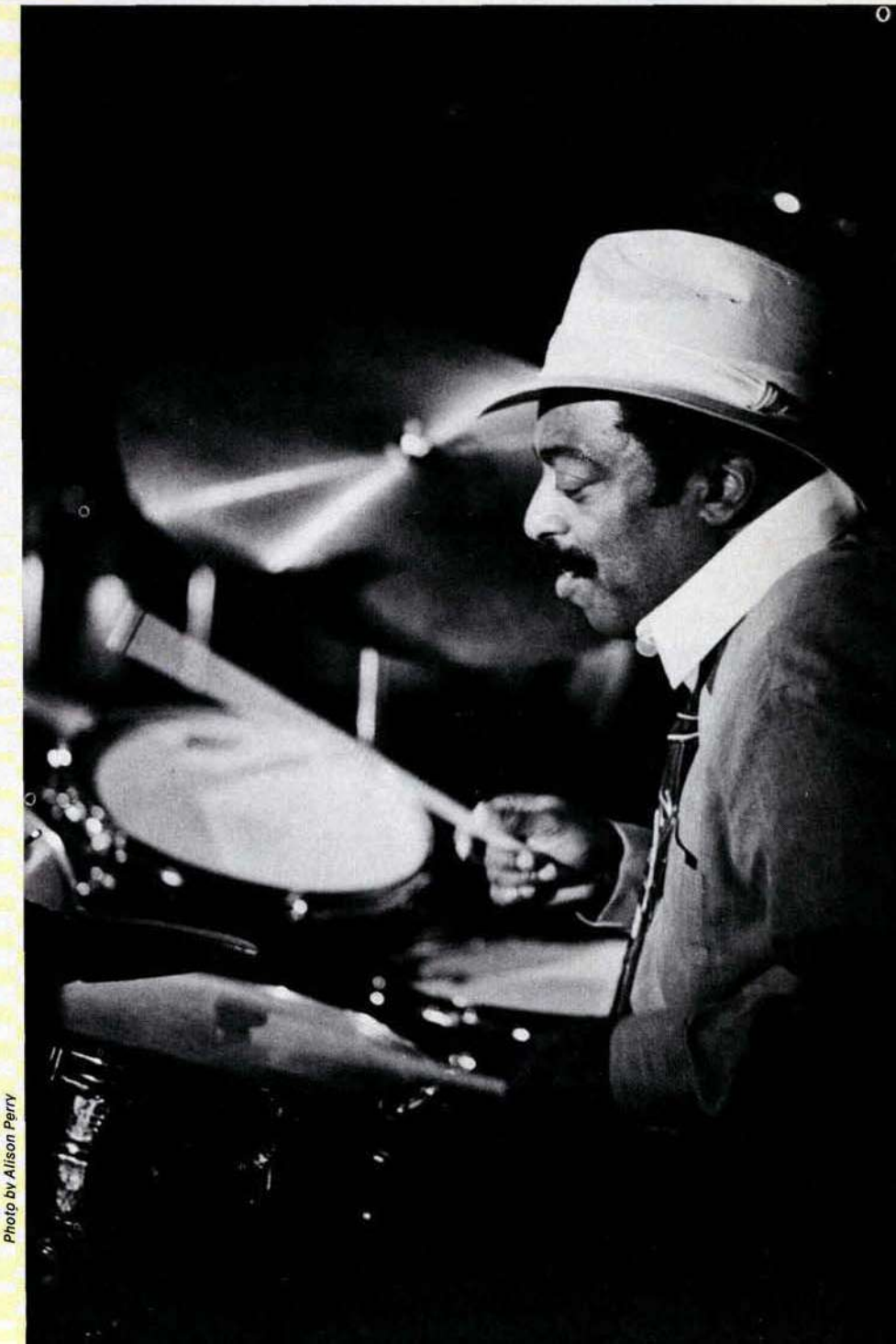
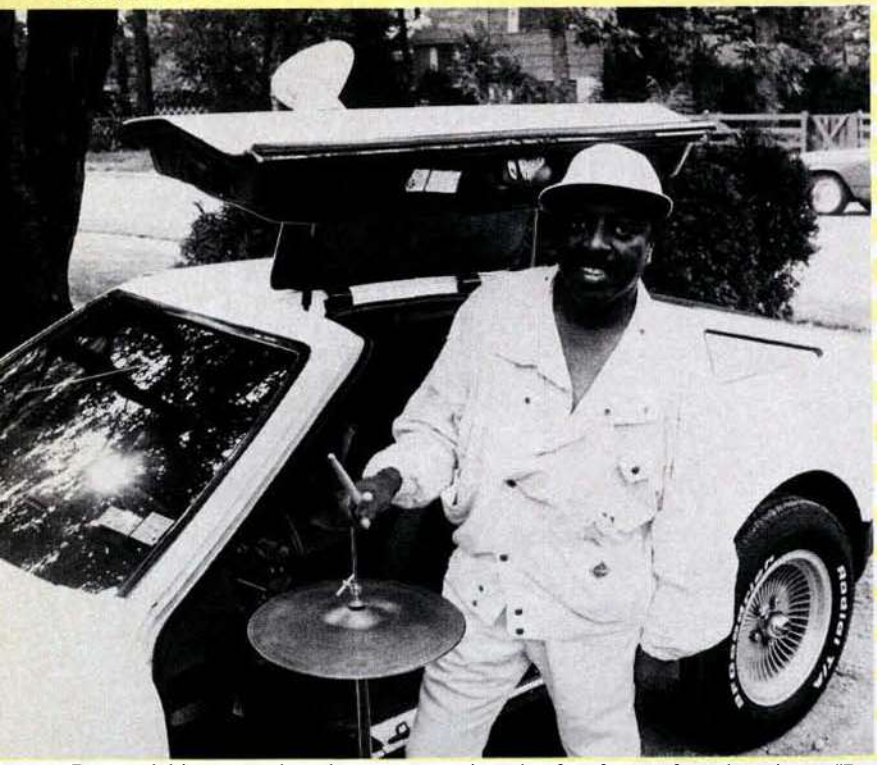


Photo by Alison Perry

Photo by Charles Stewart



Roy and his peers that they were paving the forefront of modern jazz. "Bud Powell told me, 'These cats will be playing what I'm playing now ten years from today,' " Roy laughs. Powell's boast was bold but has, of course, since been proven true. The same can be said for Roy and each member of Parker's group. And Parker himself is commonly credited as the man most responsible for changing the future of the jazz solo.

The word "genius," Roy believes, is overused by jazz critics. Many of the leaders he has worked with are clearly acknowledged as geniuses by most jazzophiles. "But," Roy explains, "if there ever was one genius in my career, it was Charlie Parker." The stature acquired by Bird and his band inspired them with a special urgency that sparked their audiences.

"When we would go places with Charlie Parker—like Cleveland or Philadelphia—we would often open up with a matinee. When we arrived, the place would be packed. They were waiting for Bird to come. You could *just feel* the tension and emotion when you walked in. Bird was late often, but when he came in, he would *burn.* Oh, man, it was just such a thrill to be there—to be on the bandstand.

Photo by Bob Shamis

"Today, everybody has listened to everything Bird has played, and it has been copied so much that somebody else will play it and say, 'Why is he so much of a genius? I can play that.' But at *that* time . . . !

"Charlie Parker never really told me what or how to play. That's one of the things you sometimes find with that type of genius—more so than today: Everyone now is ready to tell you what to play. Everyone wants to tell drummers what to do. Fortunately, that doesn't concern me much, because I prefer to do my own projects. The only thing I remember Charlie Parker telling me, if we were playing a big hall, was, 'Keep it down at first until you get the feeling of the room.' Other than that, we just *played.* I would listen—just grasp. You have to be on the stand and play drums, especially when you play with a lot of different people.

"One of the things that I can do on the bandstand is to make somebody sound good. As a drummer, you have a lot to do. You're supposed to make everything sound good. The drummer can make 'em or break 'em. I used to play a tape for my band of Baby Dodds talking about what the drummer's role is. He said, 'You can put evil in somebody's mind. If you're evil, you're going to play evil and put it into somebody else's mind!' And that's true, man."

Arriving at Roy's house for our second interview, I find him already waiting in his car attired in a white tennis visor, striped shirt, white trousers, and polished two-tone shoes. It's a perfect July day, and Roy has decided to kidnap me to a cafe overlooking the beach where the weather can be better savored.

After ordering, Roy later attempts to catch the waitress as she hurries by. At first, he is unsure if he has called over the right one. "Are you our waitress? Oh, yes, I recognize you by the stain," he says pointing to a large spot on her apron. She rolls her eyes up, trying to restrain her exasperation. "Uh-oh," Roy says. "I guess she doesn't feel like being kidded today. I think she's new here."

I point out to Roy that the house manager has rushed over to the next table to apologize for a hubbub over service. "Apparently she's having one of those classic bad days on the job," I say. The waitress returns several times in the course of our stay, and each time, Roy's friendly kidding breaks the ice a little bit more. By her last trip to our table, Roy's smile has succeeded, and she gives in with a big, silver-braced smile.

Over the onion soup, Roy talks about another influential spokesman of the saxophone who first shared the bandstand with him as a young up-and-coming figure in the '40s: Sonny Rollins. "Sonny and I recorded together with Bud Powell, and played together with Monk and also with Miles in '49. I also once used Sonny and Kenny Dorham at the Audobon Ballroom on a one-night gig.

"When I was with Lester Young, Sonny used to come up to my place with a pianist I knew. I didn't even know, at that time, that Sonny played an instrument. Then I started hearing about this tenor player named Sonny Rollins. I thought it must be another guy. Then I saw him one Saturday night, about 4:00 in the morning at the place where musicians went after their gigs to have breakfast before going to bed. He had a horn with him, and I asked him about it. He said, 'Oh, yeah, I had a little gig.' I guess he just thought that I *knew* he played."

When I mention vocalist Sarah Vaughan to Roy,

Photo by Tom Copi

he quickly interjects, "She's *not just* a vocalist." For five years, Roy graced Sassy's sets with the steady but loose flow that fit her style so well. The steady gig with Sarah, starting in 1953, was Roy's longest stay with one leader. "She's brilliant. More than a singer, she's a great musician. I played a lot of very slow ballads with brushes. I had a way of playing the brushes for those tunes. I used to lead with the right hand and play the beat with the left hand." Roy demonstrates with his hands, fingers outstretched against a notebook cover. The right hand swirls in circles, carrying the "swish," as the left hand pats the rhythmic pattern lightly with a direct-to-the-head stroke. "It was more of a free thing, rather than an obvious beat."

During the Vaughan years, Roy also drummed for projects with Phineas Newborn and Thelonious Monk. After his departure from Sarah in 1958, short-term engagements ensued with George Shearing, Lambert, Hendricks & Ross, Kenny Burrell, and Stan Getz, with whom he has worked periodically throughout his career.

It is often said that Roy and his friend, Elvin Jones, were the drummers most responsible in the '60s for challenging the tyranny of the "2 and 4." The end of dependence on the 2 and 4 hi-hat was compounded with increasingly asymmetric syncopations as drummers and bass players *implied* bar lines more than defined them. But the truth is that, when one traces Roy's playing, his feel and musical concept always tended towards this direction. The rhythmic elasticity heard from groups like Coltrane's quartet merely brought to the public's attention what Roy had on the burner for years. Roy didn't change to better fit '60s jazz; '60s jazz changed and better fit Roy.

"I never really liked that strict 2 and 4 anyhow. I've done it a lot of times on record dates, because the artist I was playing with needed that or wanted that. In fact, I don't like to do it steady because maybe I can't! [laughs] Even on some of Eric Dolphy's first dates, I played the 2 and 4 on the hi-hat a lot, and I don't know why I did it.

"When you talk about adapting to different styles, I think it's all part of the same family. It's just a matter of bringing out what the artist can deal with. Coltrane had grown more. It was the "60s when I was playing with him, whereas Bird was the late "40s and early '50s. Coltrane was ten years later. I had that kind of playing in mind anyhow, but I couldn't play the way I played with 'Trane with everybody. A lot of artists didn't understand: They would have felt that that style would get in the way. With some people, you just have to play ding-ding-a-ding. That's all they want to deal with.

"I have to tell you what Ray Brown once told me. He was doing a studio date. I think it was for a motion picture. The drummer did a drum break. Suddenly, the con-

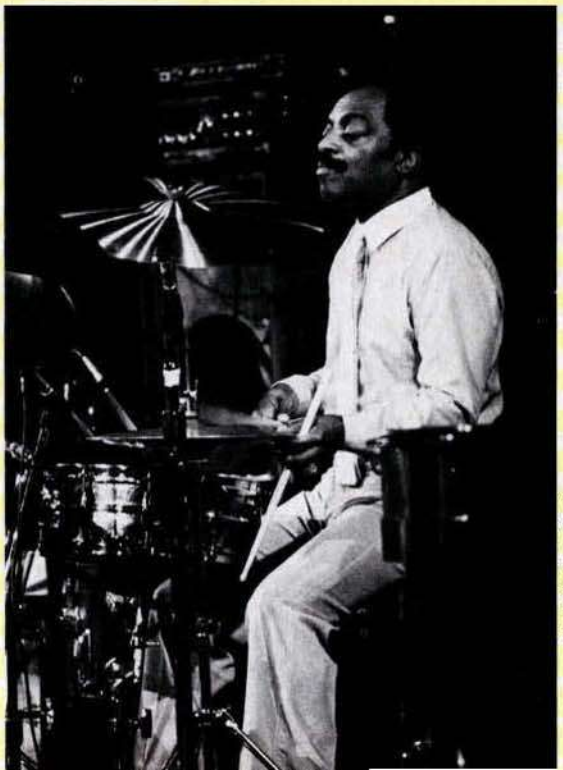


Photo by Tom Copi

A.J. F

MORE THAN M

PERO

by Teri Saccone

PREVAILING as a preeminent force of the heavy metal phenomenon, the infamous band Twisted Sister is among rock's biggest paradoxes. In one respect, the group's diabolically roguish (and humorous) image, sheer exploitation of volume, and pandemonious live and video performances have contributed, in part, to their worldwide popularity. But transcending the devastating wattage and wild debauchery so indigenous to Twisted Sister's surface appeal is the group: five high-caliber, truly legitimate musicians, deploying some of the hottest hardcore power rock of any current metal faction.

Elevating these self-proclaimed "Bad Boys of Rock 'n' Roll" above their metal counterparts is the hybrid drumming style of A.J. Pero. A.J. has a unique ability to achieve equilibrium between wild abandon and impeccable precision, while his tonal sounds are so distinctive that, at just 26, he's become a role model for many young drummers.

Before Twisted Sister acquired Pero in 1982, the band—born out of the New York area club circuit back in the mid-'70s—didn't have such good fortune with their choice of drummers. In fact, they recruited four drummers previous to A.J., all of whom never seemed to provide the necessary power to counteract the volume emanating from double lead guitarists Jay Jay French and Eddie Ojeda. Pero's presence satisfied the band's need for a strong and very capable timekeeper, and since he's been part of the group, Twisted Sister has metamorphosed into one of the most celebrated bands of the mid-'80s.

How did A.J. come to join the group? "I had spent about a year out in California with a band that I was in back then," A.J. recalls. "Nothing was really happening for us in Staten Island, so we had moved to the West Coast to try our luck there, but things didn't improve for us in California either. I had been living in poverty in a roach-infested warehouse in East L.A., so I decided to head back to New York with my wife, JoAnne, who was my girlfriend at the time.

"A friend of ours invited us to see Twisted Sister at a club after we got back to New York. This was February of 1982, and since I had been a fan of the band for a long time, I was really into seeing them again. I remembered seeing Twisted Sister on my 17th birthday at a club. There were only about 50 people there that night, but the band played as if there were 1,000 people in the audience, which was amazing to me. Anyway, the girl who invited us to the show had also told me that the band was looking for a new drummer. I had a connection with Twisted's roadie, Mike Altini, so I gave him a sample tape of my playing at the show. He passed my tape along to the road manager, Joe Gerber, who then turned it over to Dee Snider.

"Meanwhile, Joe had accidentally removed my tape—which only had my name written on it—from its cassette cover, which had my name, address, and telephone number printed on the insert, and he stuck another drummer's tape in my cassette holder. From what Dee told me, the next day when he was listening to all the tapes at his dentist's office, he put mine in his *Walkman,* and while he was sitting in the chair getting his teeth drilled, he suddenly jumped up and yelled, 'Wait a minute! Stop!' He had only listened to half of a song I was playing on, but he had been impressed with what he heard. So he ran to the phone, called the tour manager, and said, 'I just listened to a drummer called Tony Pero on a tape. He's the one I want. Whoever this guy is, find him.' The road manager didn't know how to find me because, like I said, my phone number and address had been mixed up with somebody else's tape, so he had to investigate the situation. After a couple of weeks, they discovered that Mike Altini knew who I was, and he finally contacted me.

"By that time," A.J. continues, "I had put the whole thing out of my mind thinking that, if they had wanted me to come down for an audition, they would have called me by then. Anyway, Mike explained that the delay was caused by the mix-up with my tape. He invited me down to the Soap Factory [a New Jersey club] to meet Dee and the rest of the band, since they were playing there that night. After the show, I met everyone, talked with Dee for a while, and told him that I'd been into their music for years and that I thought I'd really fit into the group. Then Dee asked if I played double bass drums. 'Yeah sure. No problem,' I told him. Meanwhile," he laughs, "I didn't play double bass drums. I was a single-bass drummer back then. So the next day, I borrowed a bass drum from a friend. I gave myself a crash course in double bass drum playing over the next week, in addition to learning a lot of their material for the audition.

"Dee asked me to join the group about a week after my second audition. They had a band rule that all drummers had to be auditioned twice, because they wanted to be sure about their choice, since they had been burned a few time in the past by drummers with bad attitudes. So when I officially joined, I rehearsed with them for three weeks and learned about 40 songs—copies and originals. I played my first gig with Twisted Sister—I'll never forget it—at L'Amour in Brooklyn, on April 1, 1982."

The band continued to make headway that year, scoring their first European record deal that summer, and subsequently releasing the LP *Under The Blade.* Unfortunately, their record company at that time filed for bankruptcy shortly after the ink dried on the contracts and right after *Under The Blade* hit the record stores, which contributed to the LP's disappointing sales due to lack of promotion. Undaunted, the band raised enough money to fly themselves to London—the land of promise for many American rock artists encountering difficulty in obtaining record deals in the States. "We got on an English TV show over there called *The Tube* around Christmastime," A.J. explains. "Phil Carson, now a manager, who worked for Atlantic Records back then, was at the TV studio watching us that night, and was blown away by our performance. He signed us to a European deal with Atlantic, and they released our next album, *You Can't Stop Rock 'N'Roll,* in '83. We headlined a sold-out tour in Europe, and then we came back to

EETS THE EYE

Photo by Mark Weiss

"WHAT MOST ROCK DRUMMERS HAVE BEEN PLAYING OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS HAS BEEN TAKEN FROM WHAT OUR FOREFATHERS -KRUPA, RICH, MORELLO, SHAUGHNESSY- HAVE ALWAYS DONE."

America.

"We were supposed to go out on tour with Judas Priest, who canceled out at the last minute. Then, we planned to tour with Kiss, who also changed their minds right before the tour, the reason for both cancellations being that those bands didn't want a band like us, who had caused so much excitement over in Europe, opening for *them."*

Twisted Sister eventually toured on a bill backing two other bands, which was quite a switch from that earlier European tour. Nevertheless, that experience proved to be a major turning point for the band, because for the first time, they were playing shows all over the U.S. They generated such overwhelming interest from audiences that they were finally signed to an international record deal. Recorded in 1984, *Stay Hungry* was Twisted Sister's breakthrough album, eventually turning platinum with the help of two videos from the singles "We're Not Gonna Take It" and "I Wanna Rock."

"Yeah, 1984 was a great year for the band," A.J. comments. "We played the Nassau Coliseum in New York just as the album was going gold. The night of the show, we received our gold records on stage, which was great because some of our fans got to share that with us. But that time was also really rough for me, because that was when I found out my father was suffering from lung cancer. During a three-week break from touring that October, I went home and spent some time with him. That Christmas I gave him the platinum album that I had just received for *Stay Hungry.* I had my parents' names engraved on it as a Christmas gift. When I gave it to him, he just cried. He died soon after that. It was almost like he had waited until I made it in music, before he could rest. I got the phone call about his death when we were on the road in Cleveland. Since I couldn't get a flight out until the following day, my mother called me and said, 'I want you to play tonight, and I want you to do really well.' On stage that night, we dedicated the show to my father's memory, and when I took a solo, it felt really good."

A.J.'s father had bought his son a kit when A.J. was just three years old, but unlike most kids at that young age, "Little Anthony," as he was called, had discriminating tastes as far as equipment was concerned. "I remember coming downstairs on Christmas morning," he recalls, "and my father—God bless his soul—had gotten me one of those cardboard drumsets that you could buy at a toy store. I said to him, 'What's that?' and he said, 'Merry Christmas, son.' I told him, 'I don't want *that.* I want a *real* drumset.' My father started to flip out. He yelled, 'I'll give you a real drumset!' Then, he smashed the kit and threw it down the stairs.

"When I turned four, we moved from Brooklyn to Staten Island, and I still wanted to play. I would bang on everything inside and outside the house, but I still didn't have a kit of my own. My Uncle Carmine, who was a drummer, asked my father if he could store his drumset at our house while his apartment was being painted. My uncle knew that I wanted to play, so he set the kit up in a spare room, and from then on, I was constantly in there playing. My father, who had agreed to this arrangement, hadn't known that my uncle had reported the drums stolen so that he could collect the insurance money. So four months later, Uncle Carmine came back and took his drums away, and I was left without the kit I had been playing on all that time.

"My father finally got me my first Ludwig kit when I was six, and later that year, when my family went down to the Bahamas, I had my first gig. It was with the band at our hotel. I had begged my parents to let me sit in with the group one night, and I ended up playing with them every night of the week we were down there. This band was called the Buddy Russell Trio, and they eventually started to fly me out to do weekend gigs with them all over the country when I was seven. They paid me union scale—although I was too young to join the union—plus all our expenses because my parents would come along with me. I know it sounds ridiculous, but it's true. I really did it."

A.J. was something of a prodigy. At age 11, he was playing both symphonic and jazz drums as well as percussion with the Boroughwide Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, and he also won awards for individual drumming at the Paris Jazz Festival, where his competitors were musicians twice his age. It wasn't until he returned from playing in Europe that year with a college band that A.J. got to jam with kids his own age and on his own playing level. "I got into a jazz trio, which was a great experience for me," he says. "We were all about the same age— 11 —and we all had similar playing abilities, so for the first time in my life I didn't feel like some kind of freak. Before that, I had always played with adults because

I was pretty advanced for my age. When I was playing in that hotel band, people would often come up to me after a show and say, 'He's probably just a midget. He can't be a kid.' So, playing with other kids was a good opportunity for me. We did the Jerry Lewis Telethon, and we also played resorts up in the Catskills like The Concord. We even cut a record of our own. The piano player played classical music incredibly well, and the bass player was as good as a Steve Harris or a Jack Bruce—just unbelievable."

One might take it for granted that, because A.J. is a member of a band known for playing heavy, straightforward rock 'n' roll, he probably listened to rock for most of his life. Yet surprisingly, A.J. had limited exposure to rock throughout most of his childhood, and his primary influences were big band and jazz drummers, who he claims helped to shape his style. "When I was a kid, my father wouldn't let me play rock," he reflects. "In fact, he wouldn't even let me listen to it. When The Beatles came on in our house, he would take the record and throw it out. My sister, who's seven years older than me, was a Beatles fanatic. She could listen to them, but my father felt that I was too young, and he thought The Beatles represented rebellion. That's totally ironic, because years later, he became a big Twisted Sister fan. But it wasn't until I got to be about 14, when I started to hang out on street corners, that I began listening to rock bands like The Who, Led Zeppelin, Yes, and ELP.

"I wasn't listening to a lot of drummers when I was young, just Krupa, Rich, and Sonny Payne. Krupa was a great guy. I met him through my Uncle Carmine. Krupa taught me how to twirl my sticks, plus he gave me tips on my overall playing. He sent me Christmas cards every year until he died. On the other hand, my other idol—Buddy Rich—turned out to be a disappointment as a person. When I was 12,1 approached him and said, 'Mr. Rich, I've always wanted to meet you. Can I take your picture?' 'Not now, kid,' he said. I'll never forget how bad I felt.

"Sonny Payne, like I said, was a big favorite of mine. He was a fantastic drummer who played with Count Basie and Harry James. There are people today who can twirl their sticks really well, but Sonny was the best. He would do a fill, and he would twirl the sticks *as he was doing the fill!* To this day, that's something I've never seen anybody else do. I've been working on that, but I still drop my sticks. I won't do it until I perfect it, and I will, someday. It looks great because you see the sticks flying around unbelievably fast. You're hitting a drum, then twirling, then hitting a drum, then twirling—back and forth—like lightning. Payne was really great—very cool.

"I really didn't draw my influences from rock drummers, and I think what most rock drummers have been playing over the last 20 years has been taken from what our forefathers— Krupa, Rich, Morello, Shaughnessy—have always done. Basically, rock drummers have transferred what these drummers did back then by adapting it to their playing methods today."

While he played with different rock bands during the years following high school, A.J. opted to take on as many as three jobs at once to make a living. And often, these jobs had nothing to do with music. Because he was unwilling to compromise his standards, A.J. stopped playing in "wedding bands" at one point because he often felt unchallenged, restrained, and just plain bored. "It probably would have been easier just to do those kinds of gigs to get by," he says, "but instead, I worked a few jobs at once, plus I kept up with my music. When I was about 18, I was working in a hardware store, pumping gas on weekends and delivering pizzas at night. I needed the money because I always wanted to buy equipment. I always needed cymbals and sticks, and as everybody knows, equipment can be really expensive.

"If I wanted a new snare drum that cost $400, I'd bust my ass and work around the clock to buy it. If there was a new cymbal that I needed, I'd make sure that I'd get the cash together for it. That's why I respect what I have today. I know what it's like to be without, because I've *been there.* Nobody can say to me, 'Oh, you had it easy all your life.' That's bullshit. I've worked hard to get to where I am.

"Sometimes when I was working all those jobs, things could get pretty bad, and it was hard to keep everything going. It got really depressing at times. I mean, I never contemplated suicide, but it got to be a real drag for a while. I never took hard drugs, but my form of escape from all the pressure was playing drums. That was my way of dealing with all the bullshit that was going on around me. So instead of going to a bar and getting wasted when I needed a release, I'd sit down and play for five hours. That always made me feel better."

One recent pressure that Twisted Sister has been forced to deal with is the public criticism targeted at the band by reactionary groups who accuse them of presenting violent images in their videos and lyrics. Does A.J. find it difficult to be taken seriously as a musician in a band where the issue of image is often the main focus? "Well, I always try to judge people for their value as individuals, not their surface images," he comments. "I've met guys like Rod Morgenstein and Michael Shrieve who I had certain expectations about, but after I talked with them, my expectations weren't even close to what they were like as people. They were great—just down-to-earth guys. I've learned not to prejudge people, because the image that most of us see portrayed is usually false.

"I'm acknowledged by a lot of fans for my capabilities as a musician, but I'm still being ridiculed by people because I'm in a band that allegedly promotes violence. When people first meet me, they often say, 'Wow, you seem so different than the way you appear in those videos and on stage.' Well, my answer to that is that I'm very much aware that kids are paying $15 to come to see me act like a madman as well as play the music, so I'm going to give

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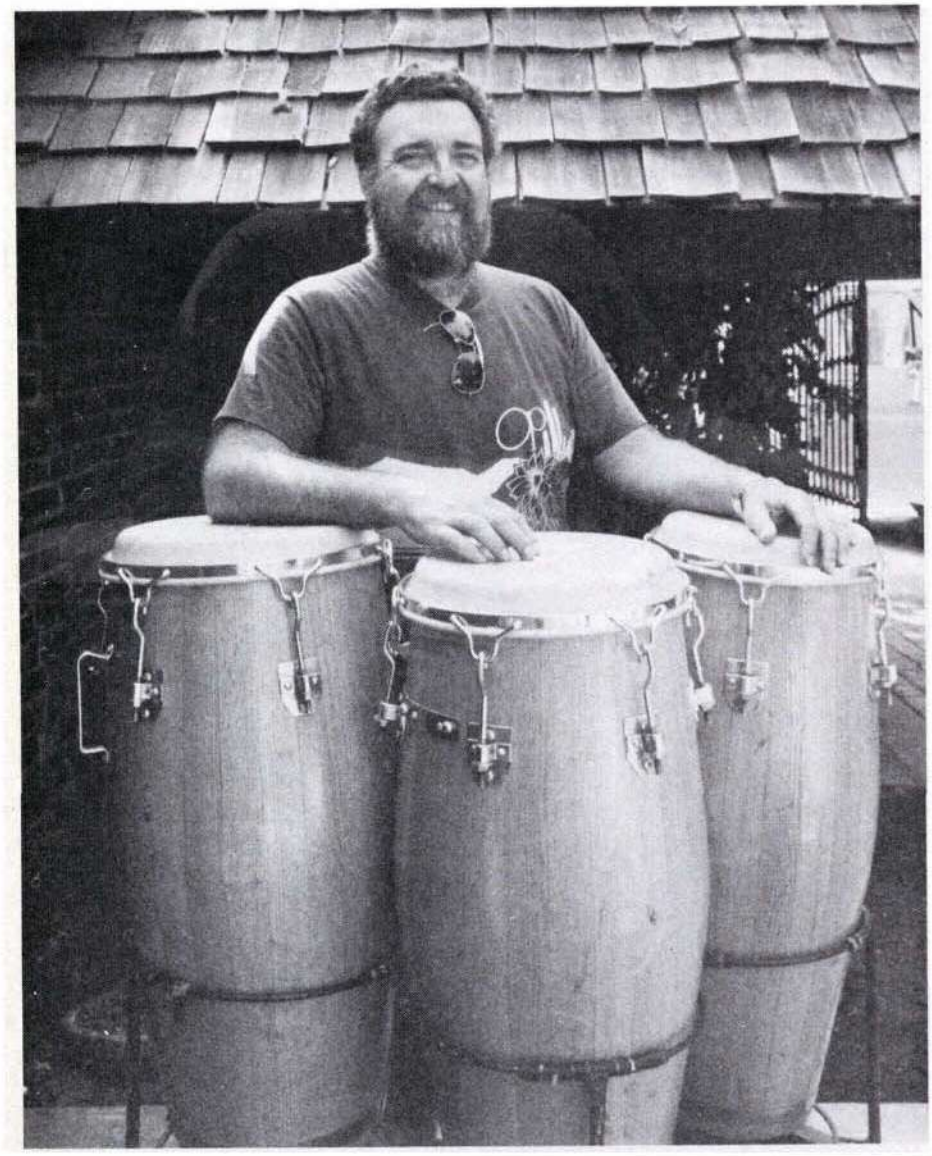
Photo by Mark Weiss

DRUM ROADIES



ROBERT "DEAR" LEMONS

Beware the Snare Bear. He's coming to yourtown. Robert Lemons, a.k.a. "Bear" and "Snare Bear," is the drum assistant now touring with Chicago, one of the few long-term established successes in the rock/pop world. The group is driven by Danny Seraphine, the original drummer since the band's inception in 1967, and percussionist Kenny Cetera. Supporting these two talents is Bear. With 16 years of recording and touring since their 1969 debut album, the group members are mature performing veterans rather than manic casualties of noveau-star syndrome. For Bear, this makes working with the group especially enjoyable. "Careerwise, they have seen everything that can come down at least once," he notes. "I've worked with a lot of groups, but I can't say enough about every member of Chicago. They are gentlemen."

The same is true of Bear. A seasoned veteran of the road and studio, his calm manner and knowledge of drums, as well as other areas of stage production, reflect his wide experience. From a distance, this 225-pound six-foot Chicago Bear with the grey-flecked beard does evoke his nickname. "Actually, the thing that earned my nickname is mostly this," *he says, pulling his T-shirt neck down to reveal an impressive layer offur. "I'm like this all over," he laughs. But get close, and you will see that this bear is a gentle giant.*

On the West Coast, Bear served as a sound engineer as well as a drum assistant, working with the Showco concert production company, touring with acts such as Chaka Khan and Glenn Frey, and servicing L.A. studio session musicians. His most frequent drum client was "J.R.," John Robinson, the session drummer whose grooves currently dominate the Top-40 chart.

Winding through the backstage halls at New York's Madison Square Garden, Bear escorts me to the stage for a tour of the stage setup. The rear riser is filled with assorted percussion, timbales, a Simmons set, and an acoustic set. Danny Seraphine's acoustic set is deceptive. Within the seemingly standard kit is a system engineered by Bear that gives Danny finger-touch control to total electric/acoustic integration. During the shows, Bear is situated waist level behind the drum riser where he can adjust the monitor board, switch Danny's snare drums, and alleviate any equipment problems.

Standing behind Danny's kit, dead center on the high riser, I confront the staggering view of 19,500 soon-to-be-filled seats. In that drum seat, it must be nice to know that you've got the Bear behind you.

JP: Could you brief me on Danny's kit?

B: We use a Yamaha kit with two 22" bass drums, five toms, an 18" and 20" crash, and a 22" medium ride. The hi-hats are 14" *Quick Beats.* All the cymbals are Zildjian. We use a variety of snare sizes. I drilled the drums and put cannon plugs in each drum,

by Jeff Potter

PART 2

In the December '85 issue of MD, *we spoke with drum techs Ted Leonard, Adam Hunt, and Artie Smith. This month, we conclude our two-part feature on roadies by speaking with Robert "Bear" Lemons, Anthony Aquilato, and David Covelli.*

which are wired to the pad inputs of the Simmons *SDS5.* There's a Simmons module below Danny, so that he can readjust settings at will. I use straight Barcus-Berry pickups wired to the cannon plugs.

JP: That's a surprise.

B: [Laughs] Simmons does not recommend it, but I have had very little problem with it. I tried all kinds of things through trial and error. I've had *MX-ls* and other triggers. Years ago, Chicago did big shows with strings, so there were boxes of Barcus-Berry pickups around. So I started experimenting, and I found that, if I wired it up, the *SDS5* would trigger off the Barcus-Berry just fine. The sensitivities are in the right range. Occasionally, depending on how you tune the drums, the sensitivity will change, because the Barcus-Berry is more sensitive, I feel, than the pickup in the Simmons pads. All you are looking for is some voltage to activate the sound.

JP: Then mic's could trigger it also?

B: Oh, yes. If my third tom goes out during the show, I can stick a mic' real close to it, plug the mic' right into the Simmons, and turn the sensitivity up. But you only want it to hear that drum. That's the problem with using microphones. It's dangerous, because surrounding sounds will also trigger it.

We do that in the studio, but we put gates on it, so the mic' will turn the Simmons on only when it hears a certain volume. In that way, it doesn't hear the ride cymbal or crash that's right next to it, but it will hear the drum and trigger at the proper time. So it's just a matter of balancing knobs—thousands of them, [laughs] Drum roadies are the closest thing to plumbers on the road. We're always fitting things here and there, stripping screws or whatever. But it has gone way beyond that now. You really have to become more electronically oriented, because half of the equipment now is electronic.

We had a special four-position switch box built for Danny. He pushes number one, and it gives him a full Simmons kit that comes from his Yamaha kit with built-in triggers. He pushes number two, and it gives him Simmons bass drum and snare. Number three gives all four Simmons toms with acoustic bass and snare, and number four is just Simmons snare with acoustic kit. A lot of drummers just turn the Simmons on or off for certain songs. Danny turns them off or on in the middle of a song. Some of the songs go from a nice slow thing to "gittin" it." He can hit the button and—Bam!—it's Simmons. He loves it. The switching box is what makes it possible. If he had to turn a knob up or down, instead of just hitting it with his finger, it would be almost impossible. When he hits it, it goes on in the house speakers and everything else. The man out controlling the house mix has the Simmons mix established beforehand from the soundcheck. That's all set. Then Danny just hits it and it's preset—balanced for the house—instead of the soundman having to know when to cue up the Simmons. You see, the Simmons is actually being triggered all the time. But the box—"the programmable mute"—has simplified things for the mixers.

JP: Let's talk about the studio. What kind of equipment did you work with for J.R.'s sessions?

B: I would always have J.R.'s own kit. A lot of drummers in L.A. demand their own equipment for the studio. In J.R.'s case, we always used Yamaha.

JP: Do you get involved with head tunings in the studio? Also, what equipment works well for recording with Chicago?

B: With Danny, I do a lot of tuning. With J.R., I did very little. I changed heads and broke them in a little. Yamaha drums hold the tuning real well, unless there are drastic changes in weather, like there are in L.A.

In the studio with Danny, I will bring ten different snare drums. For recording, we use a 24" or 22" bass. The 24" has more "oomph," but I've seen other people use 18s. J.R. did that on the Michael Jackson *Off The Wall* album. It was originally recorded with a 22", and John was called back in to replace it with an 18" bass drum. That engineer was Bruce Swedien, whom I consider to be one of the best engineers around.

JP: It surprises me that Danny would use a bigger bass in the studio than in concert.

B: It depends on the engineer for that particular album. For the last couple of albums, we have had David Foster producing and Humberto Gatica engineering. In the studio, the bass is isolated more than on the road. Some people have moving blanket pads that have been elastically sewn around the edges to fit over the edge of the bass, with a slot to stick the mic' through into the drum. They also use pieces of particle board with a layer of lead backing and another particle board layer over that, mounted to a mic' stand. You put that between the snare and hi-hat to get isolation. Sometimes that's difficult to place, depending on the drummer's playing comfort. When recording with Danny, elaborate fills will usually be overdubbed because you can get much better isolation and clarity that way. Sometimes in the studio, we won't use our usual Remo *Ambassador* heads. Occasionally, we'll go to the *Pinstripes* for a different sound. I carry both sets of heads on the road also.

JP: You have three different snare drums for Danny in concert. How are those used?

B: I have three Yamaha snares for Danny live. We tune them three different ways. The chrome is tuned for a very rock, heavy metal sound. The thin wood snare is tuned to an old jazz sound. I grew up in New Orleans, and I used to hear that snare sound on Bourbon Street all the time. The third is a 7"-deep wood snare, and that's for the ballads. I have to change the drums between certain songs.

JP: Are any of those snares used in the studio?

B: We just got the Yamahas, so we haven't recorded with them yet. Tama produced a poured-brass snare drum a few years ago. I don't know how many of them were made. It's a very heavy drum physically, and we did a lot of recording with that. We have used a couple of old Slingerlands. We also have a couple of custom-made snares from the Valley Drum Shop in Los Angeles.

In the studio, I usually take about eight to ten snare drums of different thicknesses and specialties. These include everything from a pancake piccolo to a marching snare, which isn't used regularly. Before the drummer shows up, I change all the top heads on them and the bottom, if needed. We'll go through them together and he'll say, "I like this one. Check it to make sure that the tuning is even," and we will go with that one. I'll put it on the set, and while he's playing, I will be outside tuning

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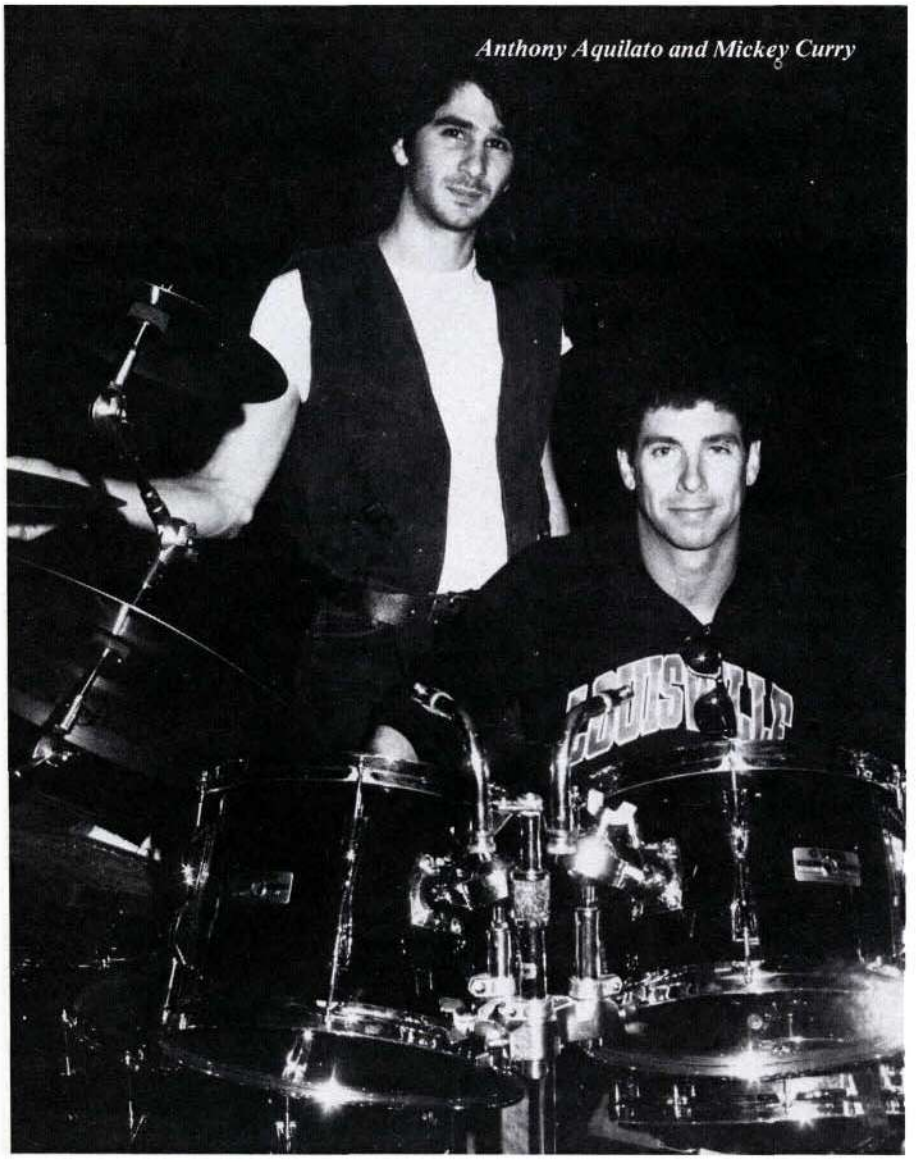
Photo by Bill White



ANTHONY AQUILATO

Big Bam Boom, *the title of Hall & Oates' latest multi-platinum album, sums it up: An enormous drum sound is a major part of their sound. As drum tech for the group, 27-year old Anthony Aquilato carries a heavy responsibility. Along with drummer Mickey Curry and sound engineer Richard Irwin, Aquilato has recreated the big boom for live concerts.*

With audio and recording schooling behind him, Anthony began work as a soundman in several New York clubs, where he developed an affinity for drums. "From doing live sound and recording, " he says, "you develop the sound you want in your head. You have to have the right sound in your head. *I used to get soundman gigs in New York, because I could get an amazing drum sound on any kit. "*

While free-lancing in clubs, Anthony kept himself up to date with all the latest equipment as a rehearsal technician at S.I.R. (Studio Instrument Rentals), one of New York's busiest pro rental and rehearsal facilities, where he serviced a daily roster of top-name bands. A tour with the Average White Band in '82/'83 as assistant to drummer Steve Ferrone, and three years with Hall & Oates have since given Anthony solid training in the handling of major-scale concerts.

" What special quality allows you to survive in the roadie world today ?" I ask him, expecting a statement on the new high-tech demands. Instead, he answers with his dry brand of humor, "I'm not surviving, "and then adds, '7 get along wonderfully with Mickey. G.E. Smith [guitar] and 'T-Bone' Wolk are close friends of mine also. We just have a comradery as friends and professionals. That's the only thing I can say about my *survival."*

JP: Tell me about the electronic outboard gear you use for the drums on tour.

AA: We have two Linns, a Simmons *SDS5* and *SDS7,* two *MX-1 + s,* which we use to trigger the real drums, Simmons, and *LinnDrums* together, a *Dr. Click,* which counts time for us, a Roland *CR708,* and a Roland *808.* Our Simmons have been totally modified by Vince Gutman, who owns Marc, the maker of the *MX-1* and the *MXE* triggering boxes. He's the best, as far as I'm concerned.

I have my own mixing console. I submix everything to the monitor mixer who sends it to the house. That makes it easier, because I'm using about 20 channels just for electronics. The Linn kick and snare are both being triggered by the real drums via the *MX-Is.* When Mickey hits the real snare, the Linn snare and the Simmons snare both sound. In the house, the soundman has the combination of all three sounds to mix together, which makes a very fat sound.

The way I put it together, it builds a uniform sound, so that, when the machines are either on or off, the audience doesn't hear the drastic sound difference caused by a machine dropping in or dropping out. We wanted to get away from that difference, except in the case of big percussion-section effects. Mickey and I discussed this consistency of sound at the beginning of the tour. Daryl Hall and John Oates leave it basically all up to Mickey and me. Mickey's the only band member who comes to the soundchecks. We spend time with the sound every day.

JP: With all of those different sources being triggered, is monitoring difficult?

AA: Mickey's not a monitor fanatic. He likes kick, snare, and bass guitar in the monitor. That's the majority of his mix. Everything else bleeds around him. I don't bring the Linn or the Simmons up in the monitor. He just wants to hear the two real drums.

JP: How are the acoustic drums prepared?

AA: I do all the tuning for Mickey. In all the time I've worked with him, the only thing he has told me is that he doesn't want *anything* on the drums. I don't put anything on the skins for studio or for live. He wants the drums to sound like drums. Live, it's a pain in the neck. As far as heads are concerned, we have a Remo endorsement. On the snare, Mickey uses a Remo CS *Black Dot* with the dot underneath.

JP: Hall & Oates was one of the first recording groups that *consciously* used the outdated beat-box drum machine sound.

AA: Yes, they did consciously use that old Roland sound—long before Phil Collins was doing it. Phil Collins is brilliant with it. He turns it on and you know it's a machine, but it's so human because he programs it so well. Daryl and John feel the same way. Daryl's theory is to use a particular instrument for what it does, and that's what it's there for. They use the Roland *CompuRhythm* for that "cheesy" drum sound in "No Can Do," and that's what they want. They won't do the song without

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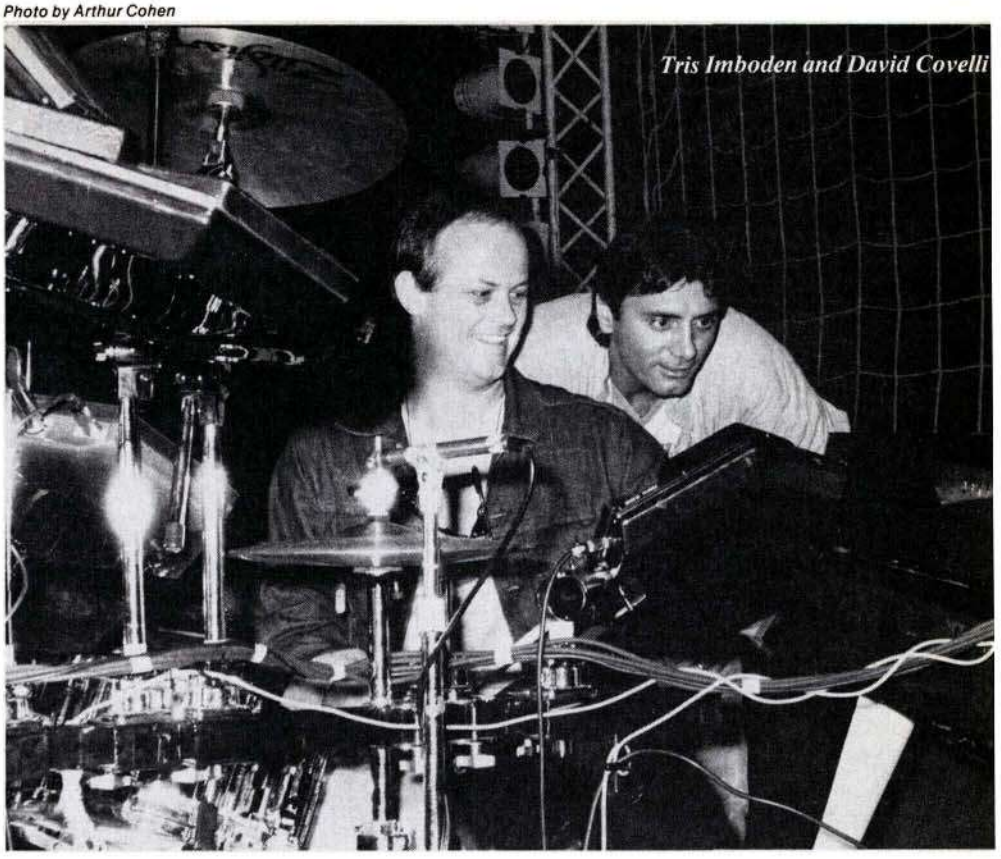
Photo by Arthur Cohen



Tris Imboden and David Covelli

DAVID COVELLI

"Oh Yeah! That's it!" *Drummer Tris Imboden 's eyes light up with delight, like a kid with his first drum. While Tris smacks his snare on the drum riser at Radio City Music Hall, drum technician David Covelli calmly fine-tunes the Simmons* SDS7 *setting that Tris is triggering from his drum. Last night, as Tris played Kenny Loggins'show, there was a problem with the module. A spare* SDS7 *already hitched up had remedied the problem on the spot, but Dave rushed down to the music store this afternoon to revive the ailing module with new cards suited to Tris's sound.*

Climbing off the riser, Tris is now psyched for the evening's show. "I tell you, I have worked with the very best technicians, and Dave is one of them. I don't think I could do it without him. If there's a problem, I don't even have to say anything, and he's already on it."

With 14 years of experience, Dave is quite wise to the ways of the road and well prepared for the technical demands of big-time concerts. Starting at the bottom, unloading trucks for Avalon Attractions, Dave worked up to Concert Promoter Representative. As tour harbinger, he arranged for stagehands, staging, lights, and catering. His first roadie experiences were as a member of the lighting crews with such headliners as Black Sabbath, Black Oak Arkansas, and The Doobie Brothers.

"My first experience as a drum tech was baptism by fire, " he recalls. While working lights for the Doobies, Dave set his sights on joining the band crew. A position opened for drum technician and Dave tackled it, assisting not one, but three drummers: Keith Knudsen, Chet McCracken, and percussionist Bobby LaKind.

After the Doobie days, Dave assisted drummer Tommy Taylor with Christopher Cross and then teched for Mike Baird on a Rick Springfield tour. Currently, Dave is on the road as drum and keyboard technician for Kenny Loggins' Vox Humana *tour. When not touring, Dave manages the Ventura Theater of Ventura, California, an opera house with the warmth of 1928 and the technical facilities of 1985. Dave's touring techie background enabled him to update the theater for contemporary concerts.*

Kenny Loggins' curtain time is set for 8:00 P.M., and at 5:30 Dave begins his final pre-show stage adjustments to the well-oiled, rolling Loggins show. Later that night, when show time hits, Tris immediately locks the band into a flawless drive that eventually lifts the audience to their feet and into the aisles.

As Tris grooves away with a worry-free mind, Dave stands vigil. Only the most alert concert-goers notice him at the rear of the stage bobbing his head in time to the band and tending to equipment changes. On this Friday night, the band is on. *They know they have their audience, and their confidence shows. But they couldn't have stepped on stage with such sure footing if they weren't aware that Dave had paved the way long before the curtain lifted.*

JP: When you toured as a lighting technician, why did you desire to switch to the band crew?

DC: In lighting work, I liked climbing around the rigging in the truss and doing crazy things like that because I was young. After a while, I thought, "Hmmm—these lighting people come in first, go out last, and get paid the least. I think I'm in the wrong profession!" [laughs] I analyzed every aspect and came to the conclusion that the band technician was the person to be, because the technician was secure in working with the artist. Technicians also didn't have to worry about as many political problems.

JP: The band crew members are the roadie elite?

DC: We called ourselves "The Country Clubbers" on the Rick Springfield tour. We had only six or seven guys on the bus, and came in later than everybody every day. But the *reason* we could do that was because we had it all together *before* we went out. We prepared long, hard, and well.

JP: What are your daily duties on the road?

DC: I handle keyboards and drums. I take the band equipment out of the truck, set it up, maintain it, tune it, and when it comes to electronics, program it. I also see to it that the monitor sound that Tris is listening to is consistent on that drum riser every night. At the end of the night, I tear it down, put it back in the truck, and make sure that it goes back undamaged, because I'm the one who will have to fix it if it breaks.

JP: How do you familiarize yourself with the latest equipment that you must maintain?

DC: Well, I'm not *real* familiar with it. I can program it and I can make it work, but when it breaks, I have a relationship with the companies Tris endorses that enables me to do what I have to do today, which is switch around some modules in the Simmons. This stuff is real basic. It's just plug-in modules. I don't need to know what the value of this resistor is to that capacitor.

I normally take a seminar on whatever comes out that's new—an operation and trouble-shooting seminar. I just took one on the Kurzweil piano, which we bought. Whatever the artist wants to use, I have to familiarize myself with. It's not on my own expense. It's just time that I'm donating, and it's for my own future because I'm going to know how to deal with the problems when they come up. If you're going to buy something, you find out who is the tech in the area that services it. Then you get together with him. First, you send away

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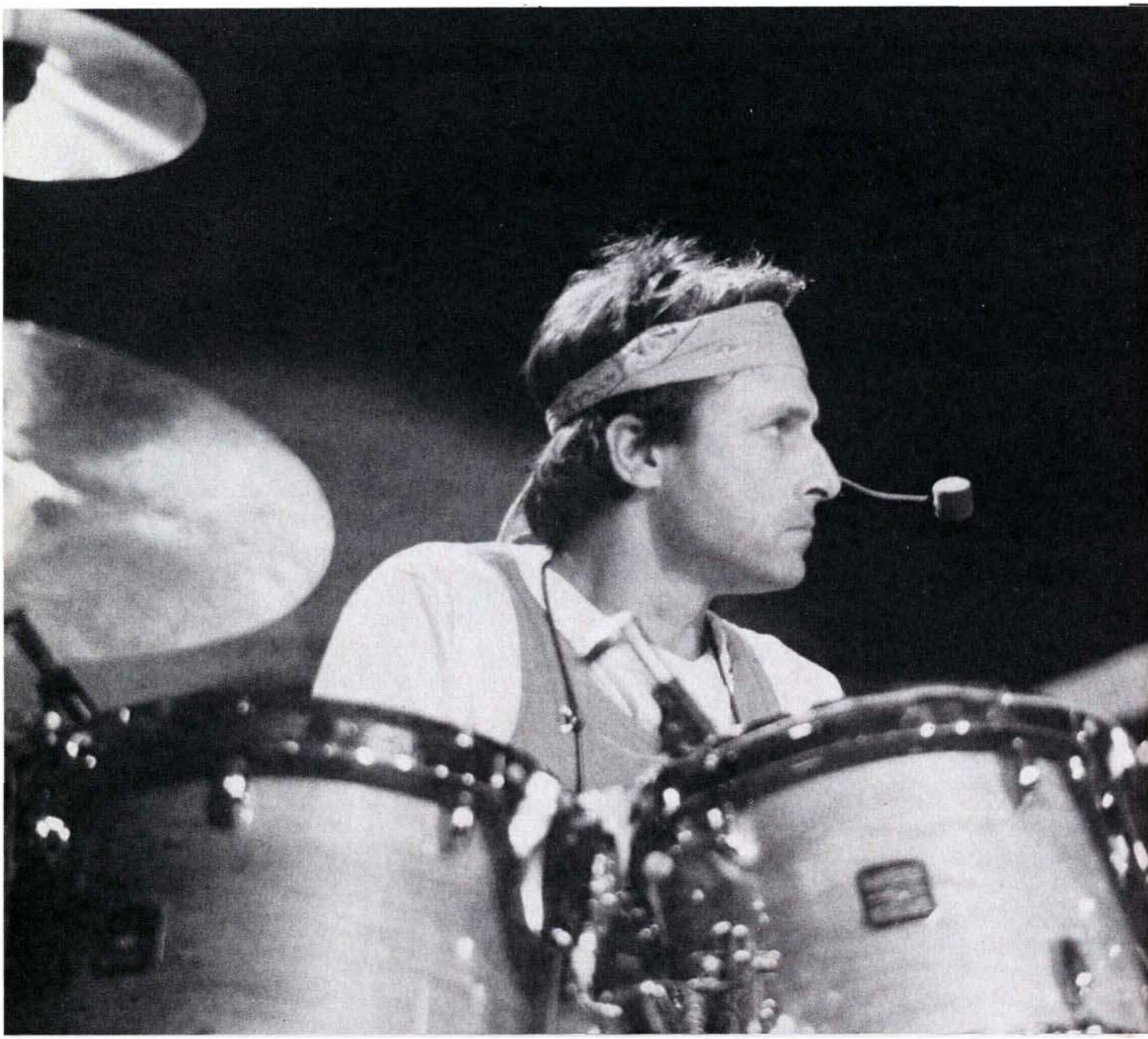
JIMMIE FADDEN



THERE are very few people I've met who haven't said, "Oh yeah, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. I saw them at my high school in 19_. "At that point, I try to recall which musical period the band was in at the time. Was it the '30s swing they were playing in the late '60s, or the country-rock they premiered in L.A. in the early '70s, or the rock they were performing in the late '70s, or the country they've gone into in the '80s? I've known them since 1968, so I've seen them all and know that, whichever style anyone witnessed, it had to have been good because the band members always put their hearts into their concerts. To slay an audience is certainly Jimmie Fadden's modus operandi.

The band came together in 1966 as an outgrowth of people who hung around McCabes music store in Long Beach, California. It was a casual musical atmosphere where people would get together, swap tunes, trade stories, and drink coffee. Fadden had no formal training, but he was a natural at making music. By the time the group was formally together, Fadden's arsenal of instruments included autoharp, mandolin, harmonica, washtub bass, and jug—perfect for the acoustic folk/rock the band was featuring. He also became one of three who traded off playing the drums. In fact, during those early days, critics cited the trading of a multitude of instruments by the members as one of their drawing cards.

by Robyn Flans

dirt 'n' drums

As time went on, however, and their musical emphasis shifted, Jimmie's primary instrument in the group became the drums, although he can be heard playing harp on a variety of records, including those by Jackson Browne, Linda Ronstadt, John Denver, Dan Fogelberg, Earl Scruggs, The Ventures, Hoyt Axton, and Michael Murphy. In 1978, though, when original member Jimmy Ibbotson left the band, Fadden was asked to be a frontman along with other original members Jeff Hanna, John McEuen, and newest member Bob Carpenter. The music became more rock oriented, and while Fadden played guitar, harp, and sang some leads, a series of drummers came and went.

The '80s prompted a lot of changes in the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's life. As they restored the more country roots of their classical 1972 release, Will The Circle Be Unbroken, *Ibbotson returned to the fold, and Fadden decided that he wished to return to the drums. Nashville has become Fadden's home away from home when he is not with his family in Florida, or on the road, which is the majority of the time. While Jimmie would like to be home with his wife B'Lise and their daughters Charlotte and Meggan, it's the live performances that he truly thrives on.*

The audience is the band's primary focus, and the musicians give them an energetic and varied show. Although country is their mainstay, having had such hits as "Long Hard Road, " "Dance Little Jean, " "High Horse, "and "Modern Day Romance, " the band's live show also consists of their pop hits "Mr. Bojangles, " "An American Dream," and "Make A Little Magic, "such bluegrass standards as "Rocky Top, " "Randy Lyn Rag, " and "Way Downtown," and even such rock numbers as "Cadillac Ranch. "

"Just as long as Johnny got his fiddle and Jimmie got his drums along, then Jeffrey and me and Bobby will be singing all our favorite songs. Catch a fire from the folks in a front row, fan the flames as the beat gets strong. It's great to be a part of something so good that's lasted so long, "—from "Partners, Brothers And Friends, " written by Jimmy Ibbotson.

RF: Early on, you guys were doing all kinds of things musically.

JF: Bluegrass, skiffle music, some swing tunes, some jugband versions of big band songs, some contemporary pieces written by the likes of Jackson Browne, Steve Noonan, and Greg Copeland. Nobody was playing drums at that time. Jeff was playing washboard, which amounted to our version of the drums. I was playing the Washtub bass, and we were the rhythm section. We didn't incorporate drums into the band until we started getting a little more legitimate, instrumentwise. We started using trombones, clarinets, and, naturally,

we wanted to do some of the swing tunes a little more authentically, which required a bass drum, snare drum, and hi-hat, at least. Drums became more prominent in our music with the advent of *Uncle Charlie,* which was sort of a benchmark for us, musically. We decided not to play a lot of old, obscure tunes, but to play music that we felt was a contemporary development of our collective styles. We played tunes by writers like Kenny Loggins and Jackson Browne—music we felt best defined our own musical interests.

RF: When drums were first added, you were nominated for the auspicious task of drummer.

JF: Jeff played a little during that time period, and I played a little. If something else was more important, then the other person ended up playing the drums.

RF: So you actually picked up the drums on the job.

JF: I never had any formal training. I came into music probably like a lot of people do. The band got together and said, "Let's play music and have a band." Somebody, somehow, got Jeff Hanna interested in playing. Jeff had a little set in his room, so I used to play around on it, and it sort of came naturally to me. On the early Nitty Gritty Dirt Band albums, I think Jim Gordon or Earl Palmer played the stuff. Jim Gordon is a real good example of one of my early influences. He had just gotten into town when he played on our records, and I'd say, "How do you do this?" He'd show me and I could do it. Now, looking back, I wish I'd had the time to take lessons. I don't recommend doing it the way I did it. Now I'm trying to catch up and find some instruction to learn the basic reading skills, which I feel all players should know.

RF: Who were some of your other influences?

JF: My influences have primarily been people who were feel players, as opposed to those who are technically great. Sometimes they were one and the same. I don't think I'd get any argument about Steve Gadd being able to do both. I've always enjoyed Levon Helm for his soul and his fire, and Jim Keltner for his feel. He could always play things so loose and keep it so together. The stuff he did with Leon Russell always knocked me out. I like the drummer who played with Muddy Waters. He could play a shuffle that was so loose. I also like the drummer with the Amazing Thunderbirds, who has a great loose shuffle. One person who recently influenced me a lot was Harvey Mason on the *Headhunter* album and on the tune "Headhunter" where he used the 16th-note phrase in the backbeat. That opened a lot of doors for me. It made me realize that your left hand can do a lot of things you wouldn't normally think it could do. I've learned a lot just from hearing that one cut.

A lot of earlier people who inspired me were people in Los Angeles when we were starting to play and record, like Earl Palmer, Hal Blaine, and Jimmy Gordon. Those were the people I got to watch. Watching those guys was my biggest inspiration to start playing. There was Sandy Konikoff, who used to play with Taj Mahal. He said, "Go for tone. Don't let the fires go out." He always wanted a snare that was 10" deep with gut snares. What a crazy guy! I also like Chuck Blackwell, who played with Taj, too. I like a lot of different people for a lot of different reasons. I love Jeff Porcaro's playing, because he has such great hi-hat things. He's a suave player. He's got a lot of style and it's very uptown. I listen to some jazz now, because I find it's enlightening for me to hear some of the things that are taking place. The things I like are more the groups who are melodic, like the Yellowjackets and Pat Metheny. I like picture music. I don't think I'll ever be able to play like Danny Gottlieb and Rod Morgenstein, but I sure enjoy what they do.

RF: To go back to the early days once again, when Jim Ibbotson came into the group in 1969, he played drums, too.

JF: Yes. Jimmy was, and still is, the only schooled drummer of the three of us, being able to play all 26 rudiments. As I said before, sometimes other things take precedence, and his position in front as bass player, frontman, and lead vocalist was more important than having him as drummer.

RF: Is it difficult working in a band where nearly everyone has played drums?

JF: No. It just makes me want to play better. It makes me want to make them comfortable with my abilities. It's easy sometimes, in that they understand what I'm doing. Then it's difficult sometimes, because they understand so well that they may have an idea that they want me to do, where I might want to do something different. We have to discuss it, and maybe have a few words over it. But I think the communication is far better in that both Jeff and Jimmy understand what it is they want and how to explain themselves.

RF: How do you feel about having been in both background and up-front positions?

JF: I like being in back. I consider myself a driving wheel. I have always felt that the beat was essential. I got that from watching old blues players sitting on stage, stomping their feet. The beat never left.

Even when we didn't have drums, the band was always beat conscious. We've had a number of drummers in this band, and if there was someone back there playing who wasn't beat conscious and energy conscious, then the people up front noticed it. When I was up front, if somebody back there wasn't kicking it in, I noticed it and wanted to be back there doing it. At that point in my life, I realized that, if that's how I felt about it, I ought to be back there doing it.

RF: Do you think the time away from the drums created a freshness towards the instrument?

JF: It's very funny you asked that, because during the time away from playing, I was around a lot of players I really admired who did things I was not quite articulate enough to do. Somehow I seem to have absorbed a lot of those ideas. I came back to the set with them, and they came out.

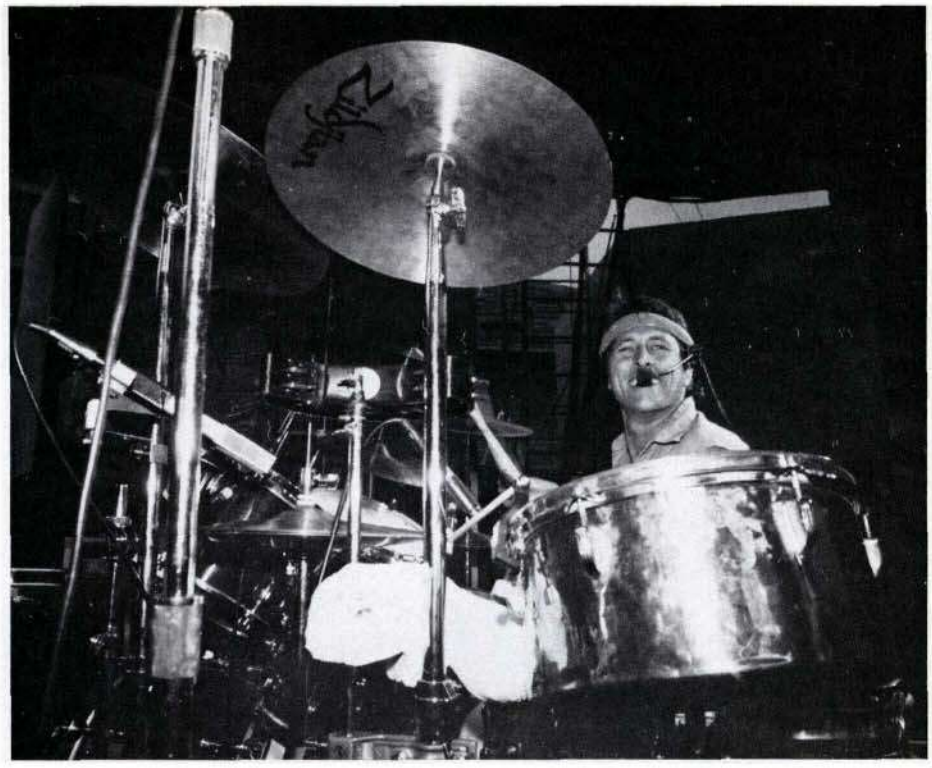
RF: When you recommitted yourself to drums, how did you go about preparing for that venture?

JF: Practice, practice, practice.

RF: What did that practicing consist of?

JF: I like to practice with records and tapes, which I think is a real nice outlet, in that I can have a rhythm section to play with. It's a lot more fun than playing by myself. I also like to find tapes that have good metronomic time, or use a click track or drum machine of some sort. That way, I get a chance to settle down with time, and I'm not being influenced by another player's time. I find that it's very interesting to see how other people phrase things around the people in their groups.

As for practicing now, I normally just play some straight single-stroke 8ths, or something like that, on the bed, just to get my arms limbered up a little bit. There's no bounce on the bed to speak of, so instead of getting a good rebound and letting the stick carry my hand back up, I have to *pick* it up. I find that, in picking the stick up as opposed to letting it *come* up, it makes me work a little harder. I've been working out of the *Stick Control* book lately, which I highly recommend to anybody who doesn't read music. It was recommended to me by one of my earlier influences, George Grantham, who is back working with Poco and who is one of the early country/rock giants in California. That's been a great help to me. A lot of the style I use in our show has to do with a right-left alternating 8th-note pattern, so I find that *Stick Control* has been very beneficial to me in that respect. It's all single stroke, in most cases. I do use some double strokes, although I don't use them on stage very often, if at all. Our music is so simple that it just doesn't translate as well as it does in some other forms. I find that it's good for me to practice those things that I don't use, because it gives me a better sense of right-left balance, which is very hard to maintain when you travel. Sometimes when you're



in an uncomfortable situation, maybe doing overnights on the bus for five days in a row, your right side might get a little cramped up, or your right arm might feel a little different from your left. Maybe you have pulled a muscle on one side from lifting something. I attempt to get both hands and arms feeling as close together as possible, and to get myself centered. That's just a matter of playing straight strokes and getting them to feel the same.

RF: You mentioned phrasing before.

"ITS A MATTER OF GOING OUT AND WORKING FOR WHAT YOU WANT. IF GOING THROUGH SOME BAD TIMES FOR A LITTLE WHILE IS PART OF IT, THEN THAT'S PART OF IT."

JF: Every drummer phrases things differently. It comes from what drummers have learned as their musical vocabularies and how they interact with the other players in their groups. Jazz, for instance, is obviously different than country music. Country music is considerably sparser, and it doesn't require the same amount of playing because it is predominantly vocal music. The particular feel that we play most often now reflects some adaptation from early R&B, in that we are playing 2/4 with just a 1 and a 3 with a dotted 8th note on the bass drum. It's very simple, and the bass and the bass drum play almost exclusively together, where one doesn't play without the other very often. A lot of times, I'm just playing 1 and 3 on the bass drum, which gives Jimmy Ibbotson the room to incorporate some different things on the bass.

RF: You've mentioned a couple of times that the music you play is simplistic. I have often thought that playing simply is more difficult than playing elaborately.

JF: I think to some extent it is, because it's really noticeable if the time drags or speeds up if you're playing the same feel over and over. If you break it up with a change in pattern or there are a lot of fills involved or changes in time signature, the time is not as obvious as if you were to play a straight 2/4 from front to back without breaking it at all. It drove a lot of people crazy when disco records became so popular, and they were still using straight tracks as opposed to looping them or using drum machines. It's tedious to play from front to back without changing the feel, and keep the time consistent and feeling good. I think Larrie Londin is one of the greats at that. People slight country drummers because they play so simple, and I appreciate your realizing the difficulty. I do like songs where you can move the time around a little bit, just for the sake of excitement. We do a tune called "Ripplin' Waters," which has a long instrumental out section where everybody takes a solo. I actually stop playing the full kit, break it down to bass drum and hi-hat, and play a harmonica solo. We try to increase the intensity a little bit, as well as the tempo.

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Dav

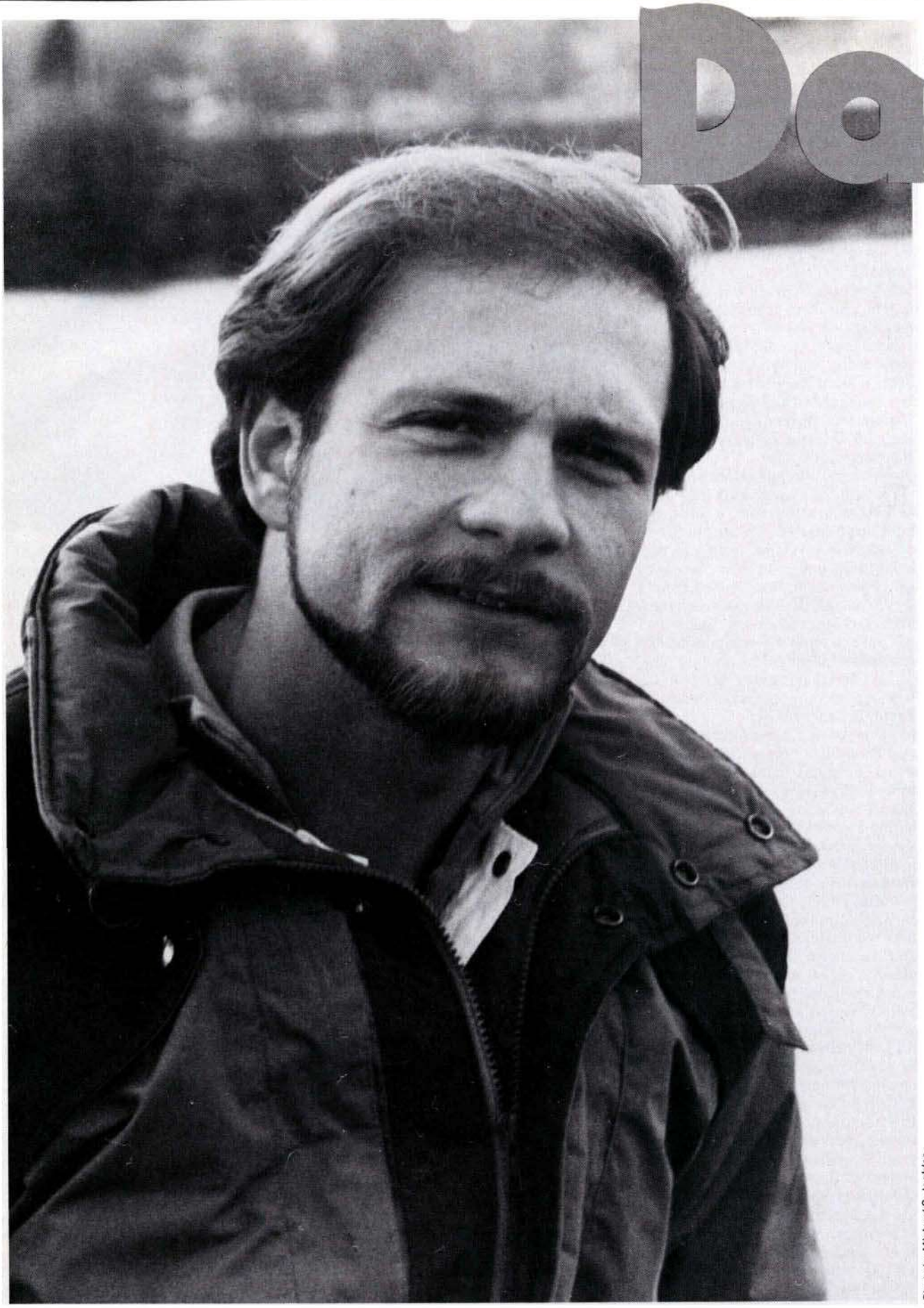


Photo by Michael S. Jachles

vid Calarco

the upstate burn

by RickVan Horn

DAVID Calarco is probably one of the hottest young acoustic jazz drummers around today. He's the regular drummer with Grammy- and down beat-award-winning saxophonist, Nick Brignola, as well as the driving force behind Doug Sertl's Jazz Menagerie big band. He's a young man working with a young man's energy, but with a perspective that reflects the traditions and outlook of a much older, more experienced jazz musician. Dave is also an outspoken man, frank and candid in his opinions on jazz and other forms of music, drum sounds, the contributions of other players, and anything else you might care to ask him about. He's full of ambition, confidence, and a personal philosophy that stresses musical individuality—a characteristic that he displays in every aspect of his playing.

Born and raised in Upstate New York, Dave maintains that there is a certain musical and personal attitude unique to musicians from that area. If he is any example, based on his uninhibited manner of speaking and *playing, I'd have to agree with him.*

RVH: Most of the influences on young players today come from pop and rock. What steered you toward mainstream jazz?

DC: When I was a very little kid, I studied drums with an older-style, swing-type drummer. He had this large drumset, fashioned very much around the old Gene Krupa sets, with tacked bottom heads and everything. When I studied with him, I somehow felt as though I was playing "jazz." Of course, I didn't even know what that was, being a kid. But I guess he influenced me in the sense that he was teaching me straight-ahead time and all the "beats," versus just pop music. I learned the merengue, the rumbas—all the beats that went along with playing music, whether it be commercial or whatever. I got involved heavily in the school music scene all the way through grade school and high school. And that had a lot to do with my being interested in other styles of music besides pop.

When I was eight or ten years old, the endorsers for drum companies were the *great* drummers of our time—Joe Morello, Buddy Rich, and people like that. There weren't that many, but every single one was a monster player—what I call the "masters of the instrument." I can remember going to see those drummers, and I think I liked the challenge: I wanted to be like those great players. And they all played jazz, so why was I even going to look toward Ringo Starr? I later learned to appreciate Ringo and drummers like him, but at the time, I was just taken by the instrument and those drummers who could really play it. I can remember picking up an old '64 catalog, and it was like the bebop haven. They had everybody from Art Taylor to Elvin Jones to Mel Lewis lined up. There were no rock drummers endorsing drums then. So in a way, I was influenced by the industry at the time, which was geared toward jazz drummers.

I have to agree that the whole rock thing came in and turned everything around, and most young players went in that direction. I kind of feel like I'm not of my peer group. I was involved with a "legit" music scene and tried to pursue that. I had a jazz trio in high school and was arranging for the stage band. And yet, I went through my rock thing, too. I remember one summer when I was about 14 or 15 years old, when in the space of eight weeks we made about $1,000 apiece. And we were just a garage band playing dumb little gigs. I went through that, but it never really presented me with a musical challenge.

RVH: What other formal training have you had?

DC: I went to Berklee for two and a half years. I was working in Boston, trying to play and go to school. But school was no longer teaching me anything. Most of the writing courses and things—the good ones—were over with; now it was just music-education requirements and all that business. It just came to a point where it was time to get out. There were a lot of different philosophies involved. School was good at the time; I learned a lot, but I also *postponed* learning a lot. By that I mean, I learned a lot of things that pertained technically to the instrument, and I learned *about* the music, but I never *learned* the music. It came to the point where I said, "I have to go," and I quit. I moved back to Upstate New York and took some gigs on the road—a lot of different show gigs.

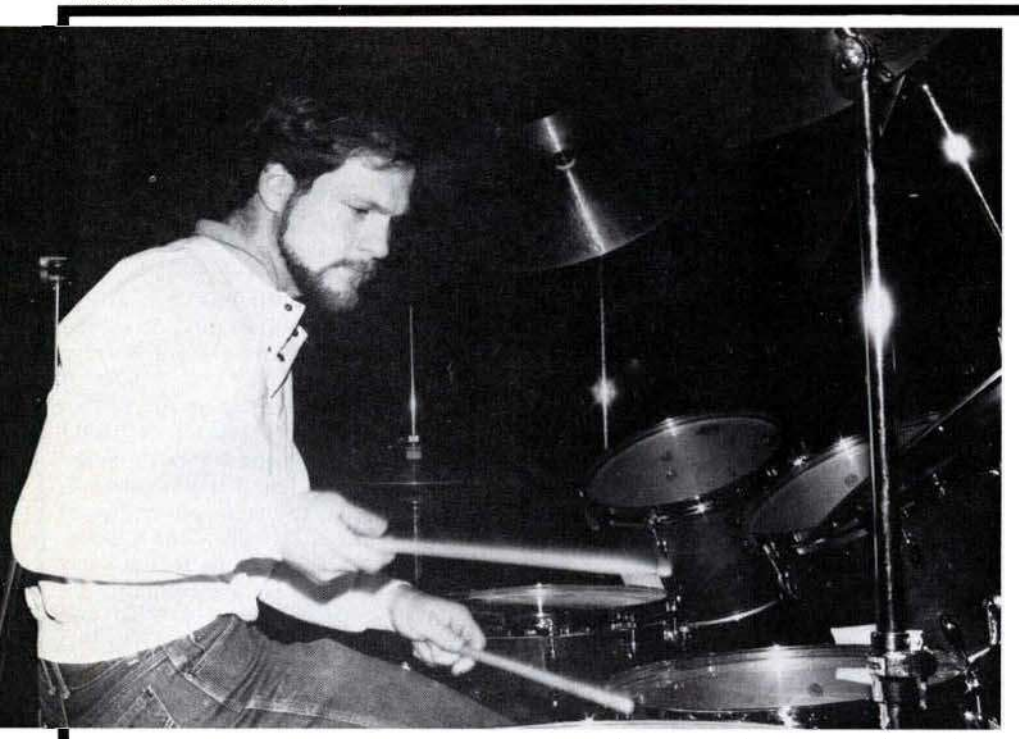
I worked short stints with people like Delia Reese and Perry Como. I remember one week with the Mills Brothers, when I probably learned more about how to play in that old Basie feel than I was ready to handle. I learned a lot doing these show gigs, but I was becoming a mechanic. It was the same exact notes night after night, with bad local bands or pickup horn sections. I started to get itchy. I had this drive to get out and play some bebop; I wanted to be *a jazz* drummer. After the second or third night of a gig, I'd have the book memorized and would be starting to search for ways to make it interesting for myself.

RVH: Which can get you in trouble with the employer/artist.

DC: True. But you also have to realize that it was a demeaning gig, musically—as far as being creative. That's what got me away from it.

I did one gig as the drummer in a house band at a theater. I didn't do that too long, because the money there wasn't as good as when I played on the road, and I got tired of "giving it away." I don't want to sound like I'm monetarily based, but when I

Photo by Michael S. Jachles



work with a guy like Bob Hope, who makes a hundred grand a week, and I'm making a set scale that is ridiculously low, I get a little bitter. After all, a drummer can make or break a show. I remember working with a production of *Guys And Dolls.* I felt as though I did a very good job, and that's not being cocky; it's just saying that it took a lot of time and hard work to *do* a good job. When you're playing a show like that, and you realize that the guy who's singing the lead is tone-deaf and drags or rushes half the time—and yet everything you're playing revolves around him ... I was too young at the time to put it in perspective. Remember, I was going to be a *jazz* drummer—the next Tony Williams! Eventually, it came to a point where I just cut the show thing loose and started to pursue the other goal.

Photo by Michael S. Jachles

RVH: How did you go about that?

DC: I went back to Upstate New York. At that time, I was still trying to make contacts through musicians that I knew from Berklee who were on other gigs. I was trying to break into the jazz and contemporary music scene.

RVH: How did you hook up with Nick Brignola?

DC: When I was in high school, Nick was the big jazz guru from Troy, New York—where I lived. Nick and his group came to our school for a career music day on one occasion, and I was picked to play with these guys. Nick will sometimes tell this story today before introducing me. He refers back to this first time when I played with him, and says I was "a diamond in the rough." I don't know if I've yet reached being a diamond, but that's what he called me. Nick says today that he noticed the potential then. Four or five years later, when I came back to Albany, I happened to get a call from a local big band that needed a drummer. So I came down and played one week, and Nick happened to play in that band! You have to understand that Nick had been to Europe, and he'd won the *down beat* poll. He'd done all this stuff previously, with others and on his own. But he happened to play in this big band because he lived in the area, and they rehearsed on Monday nights, when he was generally free. So I played in that band. Nick remembered me from that high school gig, and we became friends. He had his own group at the time, but we played together in the big band for a couple of months. Being the young and anxious guy that I was—and now that Nick and I were playing together a little bit—I took a gig in a club in Albany, and *I hired Nick Brignola!* After that particular gig, the management wanted to hire Nick again. So Nick took the following weekend in that club, and *he* hired *me!* I don't think there's been a gig of his—that I could make—that I haven't been on since. When I look back on that, I'm embarrassed. I was really learning how to play then—I'm *still* learning how to play—but this guy had enough insight into what talent I may have had, and enough interest and enough trust in me to give me a chance. We've gone on to be best friends. It's a personal and musical relationship, and it shows when we play. I really am grateful to him for the opportunities that he's given me. By playing with him, I've gotten to play with a lot of other great jazz musicians, and through all these experiences, I finally am learning how to play—hopefully.

RVH: Did your association with Nick get you involved with the Doug Sertl Jazz Menagerie big band?

DC: In a roundabout way. Doug is another story. Here's an 18-year-old kid who goes to Potsdam University music school for a month: can't make it. So he comes home, puts on a concert with a big band, and hires Nick to be the soloist. I had been playing with Nick at the time, but Doug didn't hire me. He hired people he knew from his school days, and a bunch of kids and a couple of local musicians from the area. I went to the concert, and that was that; I didn't think much about it. Then a couple weeks went by, and we were playing a local club on a night off from one of our tours. Doug came in, said that he was going to put together a big band, and offered me the job. Of course, I wanted to be in it and see what it was all about. He had a band that gigged more than rehearsed, so even though it was a "local" band, it wasn't a "rehearsal" band. We would rehearse an hour before the gig. Then all of a sudden, Doug decided to get a band together to record an album, and that was how the Jazz Menagerie big band came about. This was about a year after the first band was assembled, and it was put together mostly of musicians from New York City. The only guys from around our area in Upstate were myself, Nick, a trumpet player, and of course, Doug himself. So that's how my relationship with Doug started. It's now to the point where we've pretty much got set personnel. I do most of Doug's work—anything that doesn't conflict with gigs that Nick has. And since Doug also hires Nick for most of his things, conflicts don't often happen. It's become almost like a family thing. It's a matter of Doug looking for something that we have, and that's what we try to deliver. I try to do with Doug what's necessary for his gig, and

what I think he wants. Consequently, I've ended up doing almost everything he's done.

RVH: Do you make any adaptations between drumming in Nick's small group and Doug Sertl's big band? And do you have a preference between the two?

DC: I do make adaptations, and I do have a preference. Doug's band is a bebop band, and the charts are very difficult at times. And to sit behind this band, catching kicks and having everything swinging, is a great feeling. But, as far as the music goes, I definitely like the small-group thing better. That's because there's more individual input; there's more group creativity. There are a lot of drum stars in the world right now—a lot of players who could sit down and smoke their drumsets. But there are very few *group* players—on any instrument, never mind drums. Everybody's soloing; everybody wants to be a star. I really relish the group situation: musicians who are spontaneously playing, creating, and working towards an ultimate goal as a whole. To me, that's a long-lost art, yet it's the most fun. I like soloing as much as the next person. But I can—and do—sit home and play some outrageous drum solos in my basement. In dealing with the music, I want the end result to be a total contribution to the group. I think the subtle things I play are twice as hard as the bombastic drum things that I see rock and other contemporary drummers doing and being called great. It think it *is* great to a point, but I'm talking about playing the nitty-gritty of the music. I'm talking about the only true, creative art form in this world where you spontaneously compose, edit, and perform within a millisecond. A painter can come back tomorrow and say, "I don't like that orange. I'm going to darken it up." Stravinsky could put down his score, and come back to it in two weeks or two years. You can't *do* that on a jazz bandstand where you're spontaneously improvising. Of course, we all rely on our little secure licks and things, but to me, the greatness of a small-group situation is that spontaneity.

I approach a big band just like I would a small group. The nice thing about Doug's band is that there's a lot of blowing—a lot of open sections and soloing. We play the arrangement down, and then we open it up for soloists, and at that point it's a quartet. But even the big band ensemble things we do, we try to approach like a small group. You have different styles and different conflicts, so I try to get together with the lead trumpet players and other players who phrase the music. I tell them: "Just think *light* and it will happen." I mean, you can play loud, or whatever dynamic volume is called for. But think in that concept, and the time will happen. The band will sound like a small group, versus some of the big bands that are very weighty and ensemble-oriented to the point where it never really swings. Basie's a whole other bag, but there are bands in that heavier style that just never get off the ground, instead of having a soaring feeling. When we're playing, I want it to feel like you're flying, and the only way to do that is to think in that bebop conception. Bob Florence's big band is a great example, and their album, *Soaring,* is aptly titled.

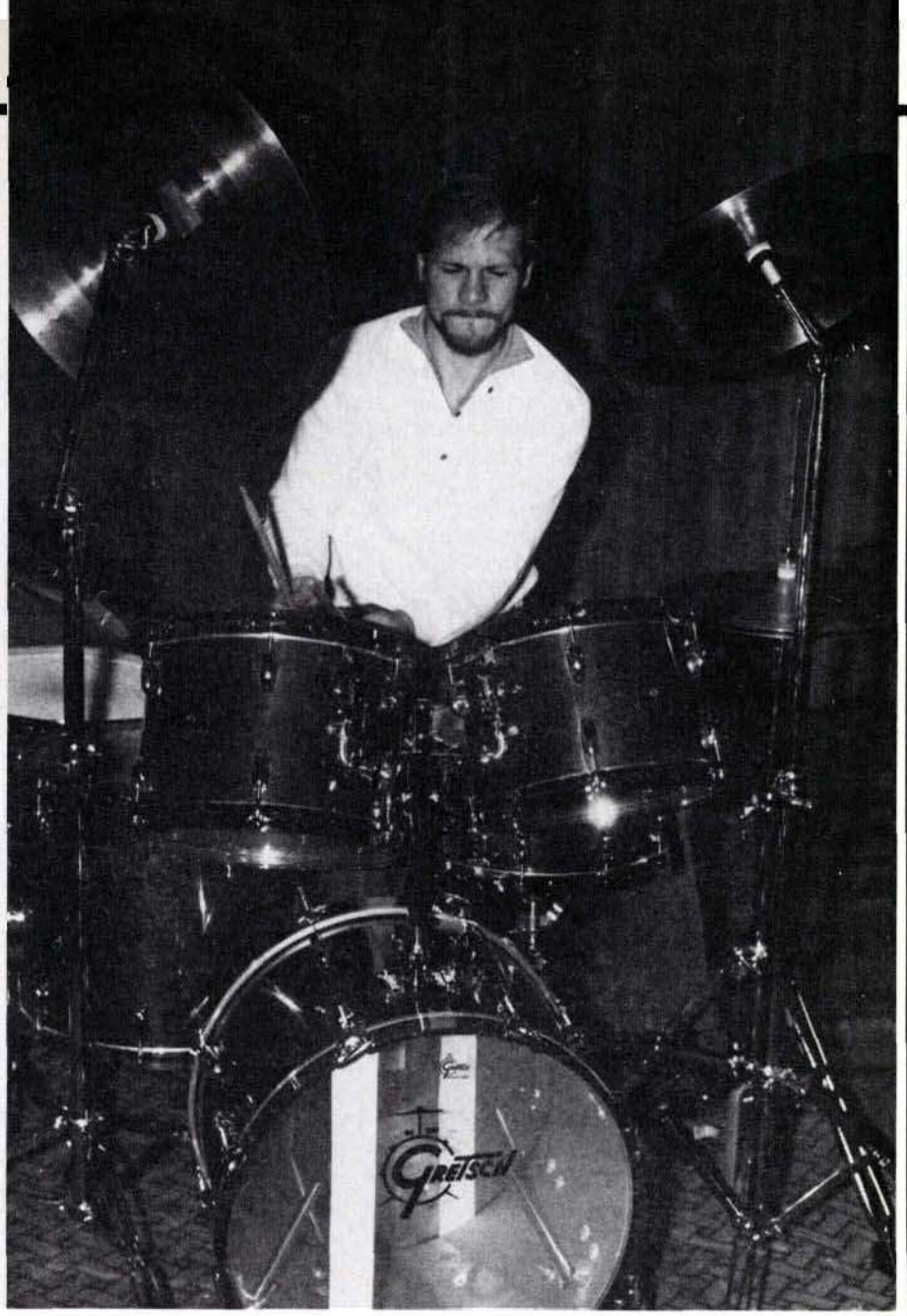


Photo by Michael S. Jachles

Speaking of Bob Florence's band, the late Nick Ceroli, who was the drummer in that band until his untimely death last August, was one of the most underrated drummers on the scene. As far as I'm concerned there are a *lot* of people who are being completely overlooked right now. As as much as I like Mel Lewis, for him to say something like he did in his interview in *MD* [Feb. '85] where he mentioned only a couple of people that he felt were good big band drummers ... I'll be very honest with you; I don't know how he can make a statement like that. I'm not judging Mel; I'm just saying that I can think of a ton of drummers. I personally think that Terry Clark of Rob McConnell's group is one of the finest big band drummers I've heard; that band feels like a small group when it plays, and Terry always plays just the right thing. Jeff Hirshfield—who plays with Toshiko's band now and has played with Woody Herman—and Joey Barren—who used to play with Toshiko—are good drummers. I consider myself a good big band drummer. I don't know how great I am or anything like that, but I consider what I do pretty decent, and there are a million other people who are good at it.

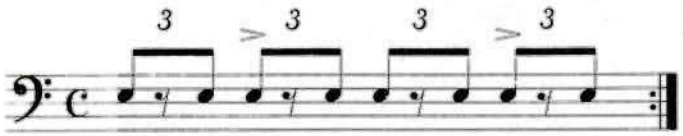
RVH: Let's get technical for a minute. Do you do anything differently with your drums, between the small-group and the big band situations?

DC: I don't do anything differently. Isn't that terrible, in this age of technology and tuning and muffling? I tell you, all these players who talk about how they do this, how they tune differently for that—their

continued on page 100

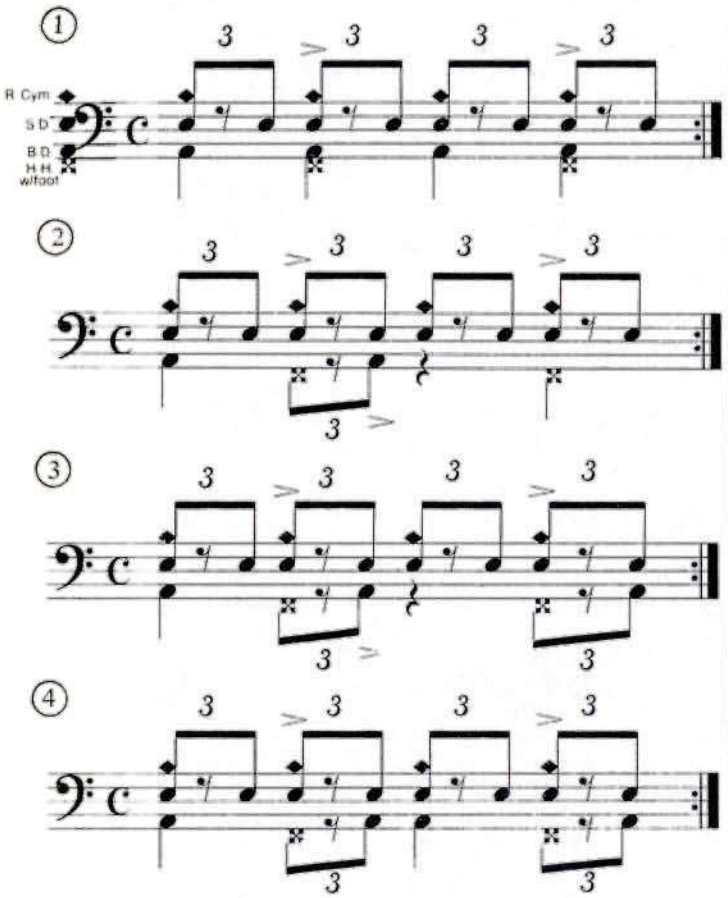
by Randy Martin

The Shuffle

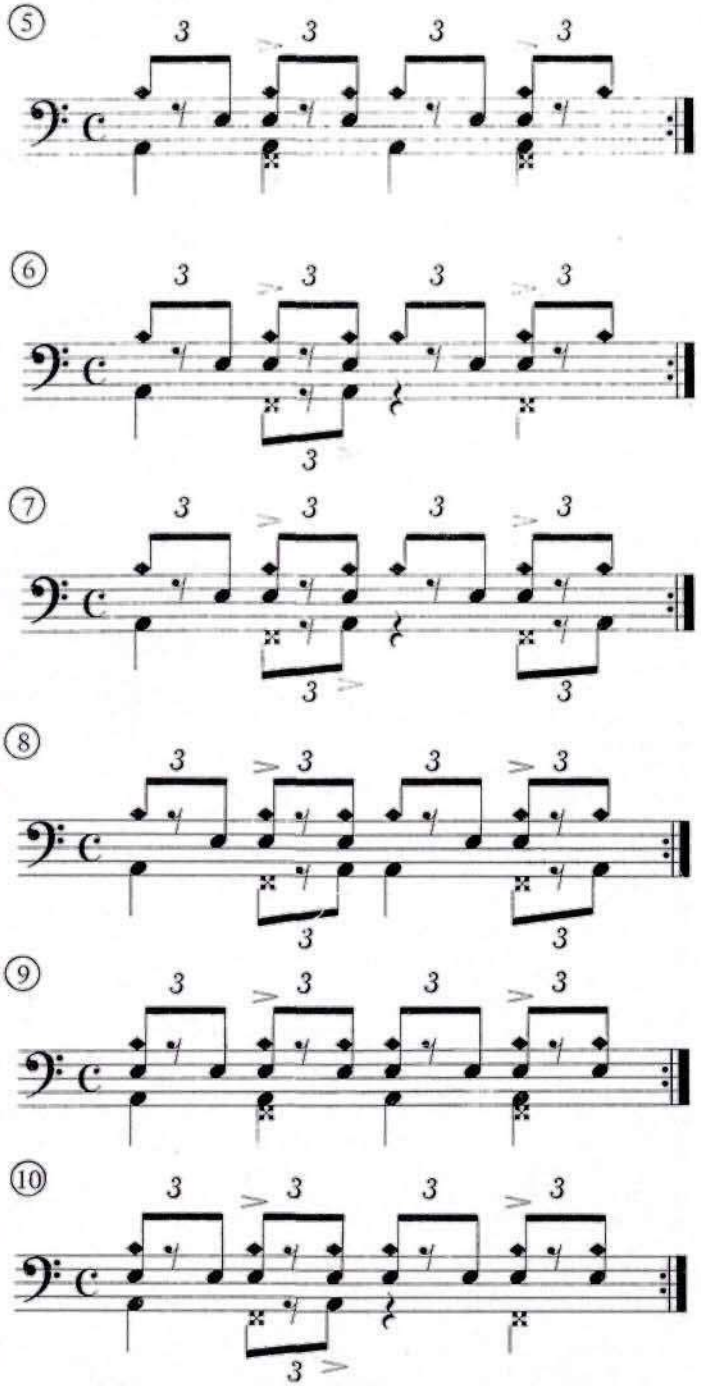
One might be hard pressed to find anything more musically exciting than a good drummer setting fire to a band by laying down a strong, straight-ahead shuffle beat. The shuffle is a very dynamic rhythmic feel. It has been used in a host of diverse musical idioms, ranging from the earliest of the simplistic rhythm & blues drummers to the complex, hard-driving shuffles of heavy metal's Alex Van Halen. Though the shuffle is basic in nature, there are a number of ways to play a good shuffle. For the uninitiated, let's first point out that the shuffle is nothing more than the following rhythmic feel:

The interest lies, however, in the different ways the shuffle can be stated and moved around the drumset.

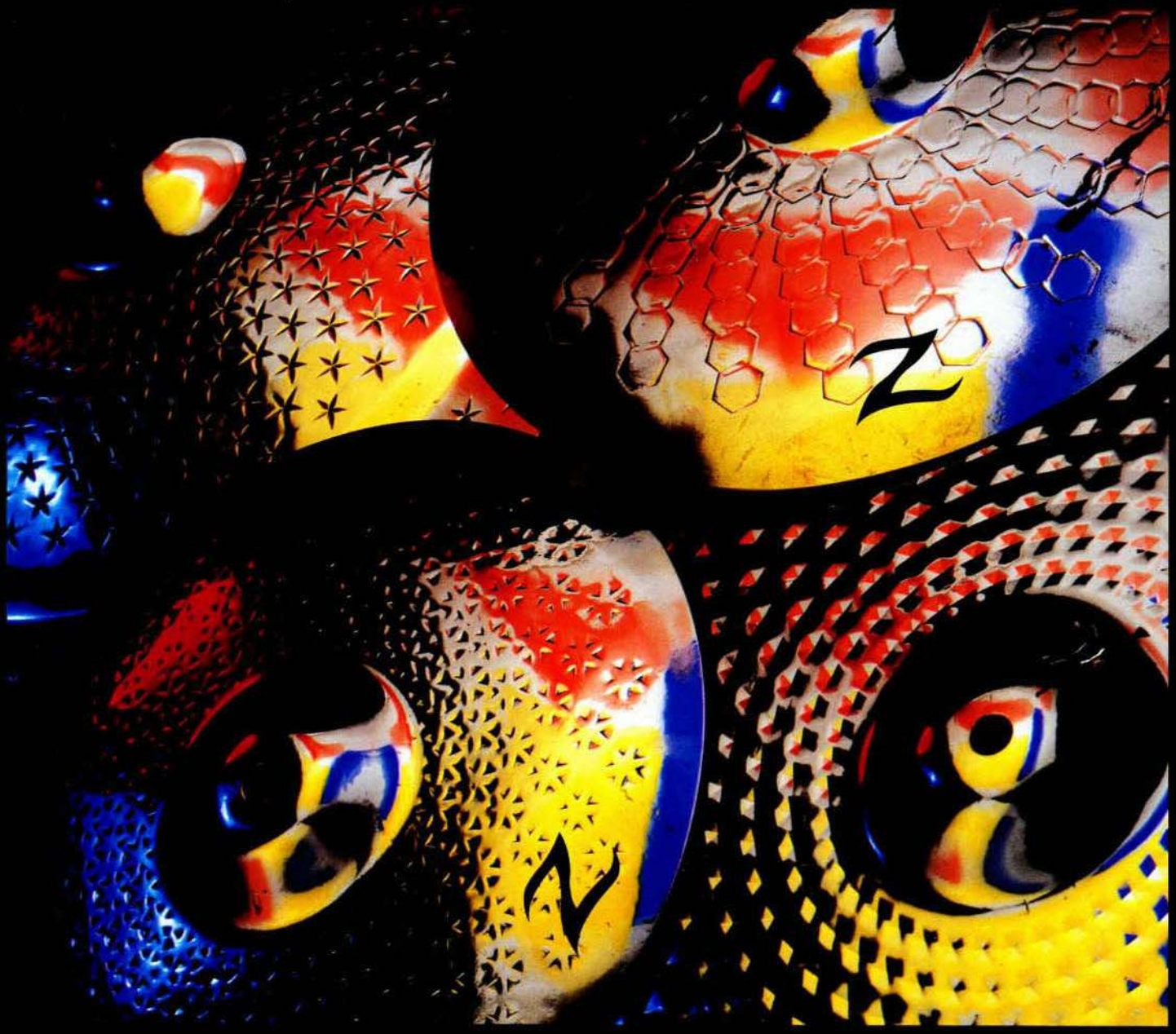
Quarter-Time Shuffle

Let's begin with a popular method whereby the shuffle feel is stated in the left hand on the snare drum, beneath straight quarter notes in the right. The changing bass drum patterns make each beat quite distinctive from the next.



Ride-Time Shuffle

The ride-time variations are left-hand shuffles with a standard jazz-time pattern played above them. Note how each subtle snare and bass drum variation significantly alters the character of each beat. Be sure to maintain a strong backbeat feel, and a good balance between cymbal, snare, and bass drum.

Z SERIES



Zildjian®

Z SERIES

New music, new sounds, a new way of thinking about cymbals — Z-Series. Computer hammering techniques give these cymbals explosive volume potential, quick response and powerful projection. Zildjian Cast alloy has made A. and K. Zildjian cymbals the world standard for musical tone and durability. In the Zildjian Sound Lab, top drummers helped shape the warm, vibrant sonic spectrum of Zildjian bronze for today's music. With Z-Series, science advances the art of cymbal making.

Z-SERIES — A NEW WAY OF HAMMERING

New hammer patterns that produce unique sound characteristics and striking distinctive looks. New shapes that optimize each Z cymbal's sound. Created, stored, duplicated with a higher degree of precision than ever before using the Zildjian Sound Lab computers.

CLOSED HEX
(convex)

Computer-generated patterns of the convex Closed Hex hammer fine tune the cymbal's bow and overall shape without changing thickness or weight. The Closed Hex gives a tight ride sound with exceptional stick definition and a loud, stinging bell.

OPEN PENTA
(concave)

The concave Open Penta pattern compresses the Zildjian cast alloy symmetrically. Controlling the thrust tonnage of the hammer alters the cymbal's shape and thickness. Open Penta rides are dry, with plenty of stick definition. They open up fast for accents. Crashes have explosive response with a short release.

FIVE POINT STAR
(concave)

The larger Five Point Star controls the cymbal's weight and thickness with fewer indentations. It helps form the radical bow contours of the Power Smash. These unique crash/ride cymbals combine elements of China and crash sounds into an ultra-low pitched ride with a playable bell.

SIX POINT STAR
(convex)

The Six Point Star compresses the alloy over a large area. The hammer indentations interlock, adding stiffness to light weight cymbals. The Six Point Star produces powerful, fast crashes with instant attack and quick release.

Z-SERIES AVAILABILITY CHART

MODEL NAME	PART #	SIZE	PATTERN CODE	PRICE*
HEAVY POWER CRASH	A40240	16″	OPEN PENTA	$156
LIGHT POWER CRASH	A40230	16″	SIX-POINT STAR	$156
HEAVY POWER CRASH	A40242	18″	OPEN PENTA	$184
LIGHT POWER CRASH	A40232	18″	SIX-POINT STAR	$184
LIGHT POWER CRASH	A40234	20″	SIX-POINT STAR	$211
HEAVY POWER RIDE	A40090	20″	CLOSED HEX	$211
LIGHT POWER RIDE	A40080	20″	OPEN PENTA	$211
HEAVY POWER RIDE	A40092	22″	CLOSED HEX	$253
LIGHT POWER RIDE	A40082	22″	OPEN PENTA	$253
HEAVY POWER RIDE	A40094	24″	CLOSED HEX	$274

MODEL NAME	PART #	SIZE	PATTERN CODE	PRICE*
POWER SMASH	A40320	18″	FIVE-POINT STAR	$236
POWER SMASH	A40322	20″	FIVE-POINT STAR	$265
DYNO BEAT PAIR	A40133	14″	PENTA/HEX	$258
DYNO BEAT TOP	A40134	14″	OPEN PENTA	$129
DYNO BEAT BOTTOM	A40135	14″	CLOSED HEX	$129
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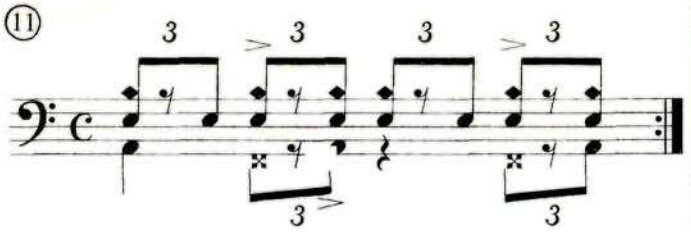

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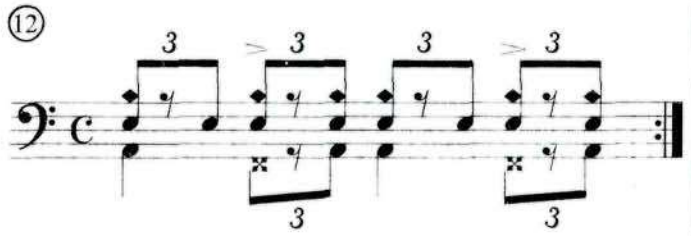

Full Shuffle

In the final variations, the shuffle groove itself is locked in on the ride cymbal, while the snare and bass drum weave an assortment of interesting rhythmic variations beneath it.

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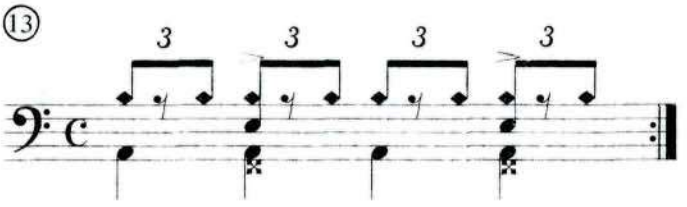

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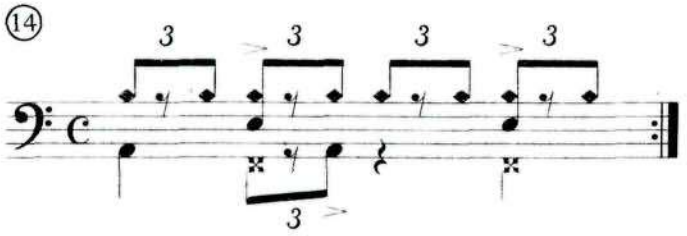

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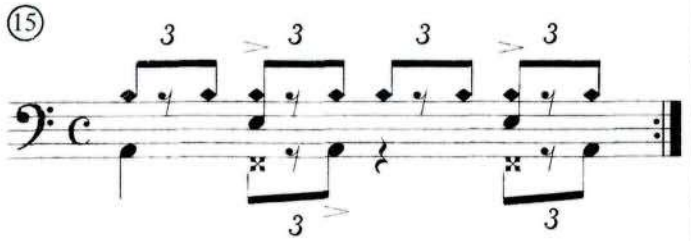

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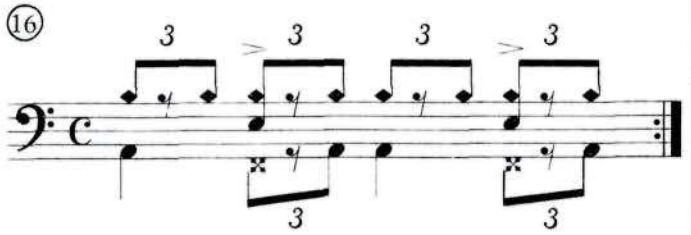

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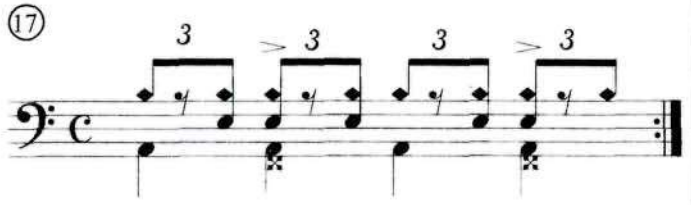

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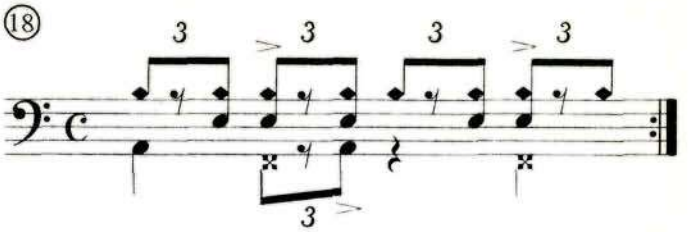

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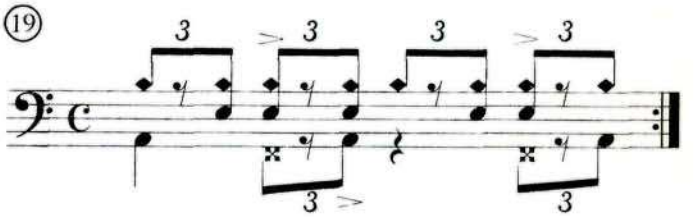

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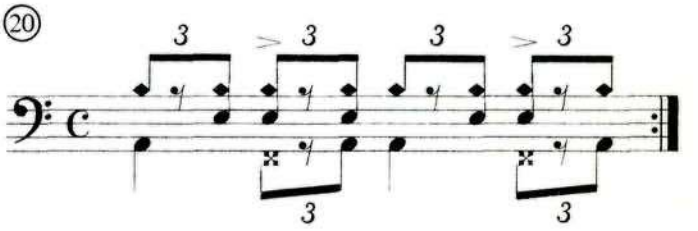

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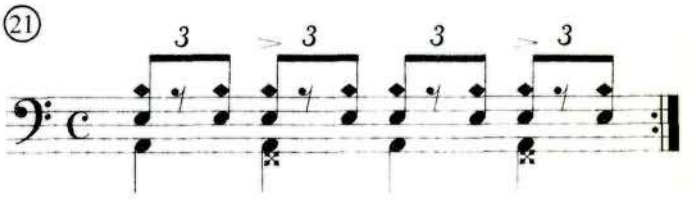

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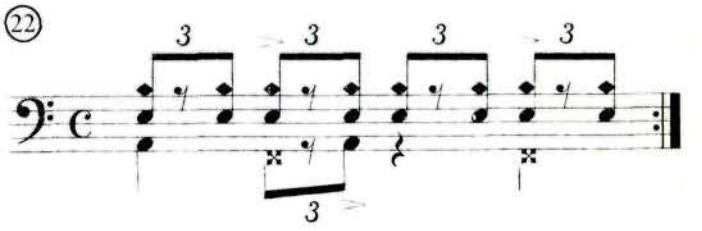

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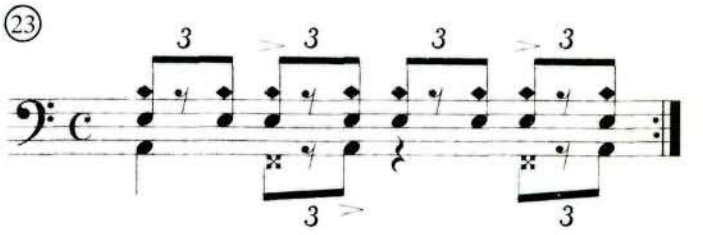

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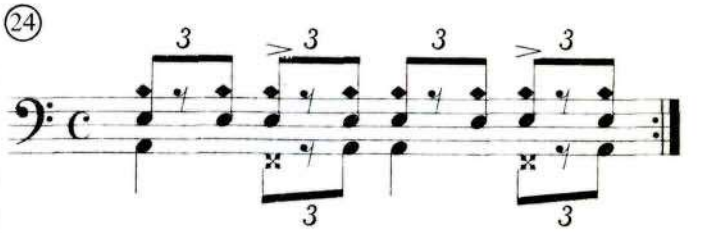


Deciding which of the many possible shuffle beats to use depends entirely upon the musical situation. Careful listening, combined with good musical judgment, are the watchwords.

by Bruce Bartlett

Introduction To Drumset Miking

Recording or reinforcing your drumset presents an exciting challenge. Drumsets produce high frequencies (cymbals) and low frequencies (kick drum) that are beyond the range of most other instruments. In addition, drums are often recorded with a "larger-than-life" sound. This article will suggest several methods of miking a drumset for recording and sound reinforcement. We'll also touch on drum tuning, damping, and special effects. By applying these techniques, you can greatly improve the drum sound you put on tape or project to an audience.

Let's start with a brief discussion about microphones. The two types of microphones used for recording drumsets are *dynamic* and *condenser* mic's. Due to different operating principles, dynamics are typically used on drums, while condensers are most often used on cymbals.

Omnidirectional microphones pick up sounds arriving from all directions. This characteristic makes them suitable for picking up the entire set with one centrally located microphone (as in Figure 1). *Unidirectional* microphones pick up sounds mainly from one direction—directly in front of the microphone—and reject sounds toward the rear. Unidirectional (or *cardioid)* mic's typically are used to isolate each drum and increase gain before feedback.

Now let's look at recording techniques for the drumset. The first step is to make the drums sound good "live." If the set itself sounds bad, you'll have a hard time making it sound good on the recording.

In studios, the drumset is sometimes put on a riser about one and a half feet tall to provide better eye contact between the drummer and the rest of the band. *Goboes* (sound-isolating panels) about four feet tall often are placed around the set to reduce drum "leakage" into other microphones. Alternatively, the set may be placed in a drum booth—a small padded room with large windows—for extra isolation.

When you're tuning the drums, adjust all the lugs around the drum so that they have equal tension. This will result in a pure tone when you hit the drum; otherwise, the differently tensioned areas of the drumhead will "beat" with themselves and produce a "wobbly," unpleasant tone. The drumshell resonates and reinforces the tone of the drumheads. Tom-toms have only a narrow range of effective tuning, about 1/2 step up or down.

If the toms or snare drum ring excessively, tape a folded paper towel or handkerchief to the heads near the edge. To reduce excessive cymbal ringing, apply masking tape in strips from bell to rim. Oil the kick drum pedal to prevent squeaks. Tape rattling hardware in place with duct tape.

Now you're ready to mike the set. For a "tight," close-up sound, place the mic's very close to the edge of each drumhead. For a more open, airy sound, move the mic's back a few inches, use fewer mic's, or mix in some room mic's (such as PZMs [Pressure Zone Microphones] or omni condensers) placed several feet away.

Here's a detailed description of typical miking techniques for each element of the drumkit:

Snare. Bring the mic' in from the front of the set on a boom. Place it about one inch above the rim, angled down toward the point where you hit the batter head (Figure 2). Either a cardioid condenser or cardioid dynamic microphone works fine; use whatever sounds best for the tune being recorded. Most mic's with a cardioid pattern have *proximity effect,* which boosts the bass up close and adds fullness to the snare beat.

You may want to aim the snare mic' partly toward the hi-hat to pick up both instruments on one microphone. On the other hand, if you want to mike the snare and hi-hat separately, bring the boom in

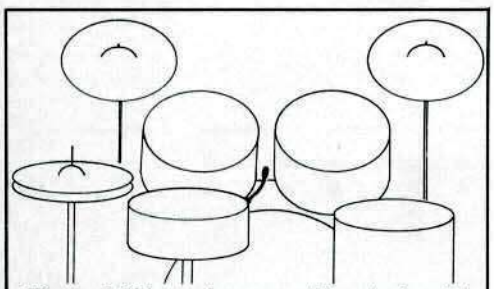


Fig. 1: Miking a drumset with a single mini omnidirectional condenser mic'. The mic' is clipped onto the snare drum rim. (Another mic' goes in the kick drum.)

Typical microphone placements for a drumset:

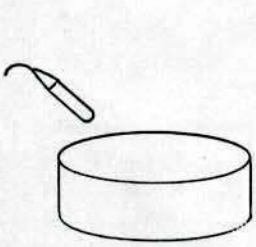


Fig. 2: Snare

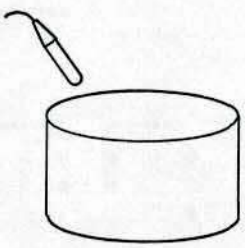


Fig. 4: Double-headed tom-tom

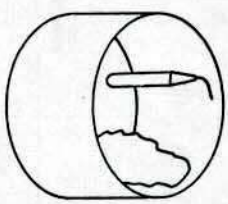


Fig. 6: Kick drum

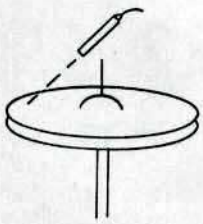


Fig. 3: Hi-Hat

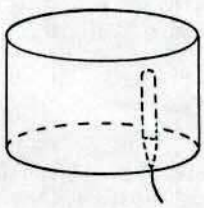


Fig. 5: Single-headed tom-tom

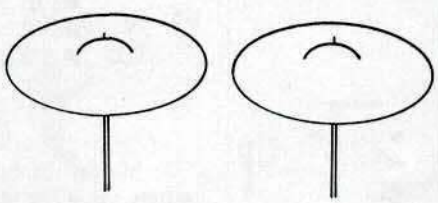


Fig. 7: Overheads

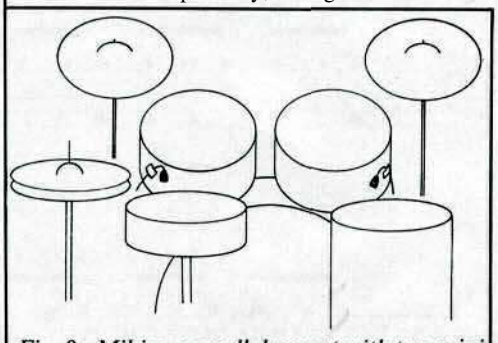
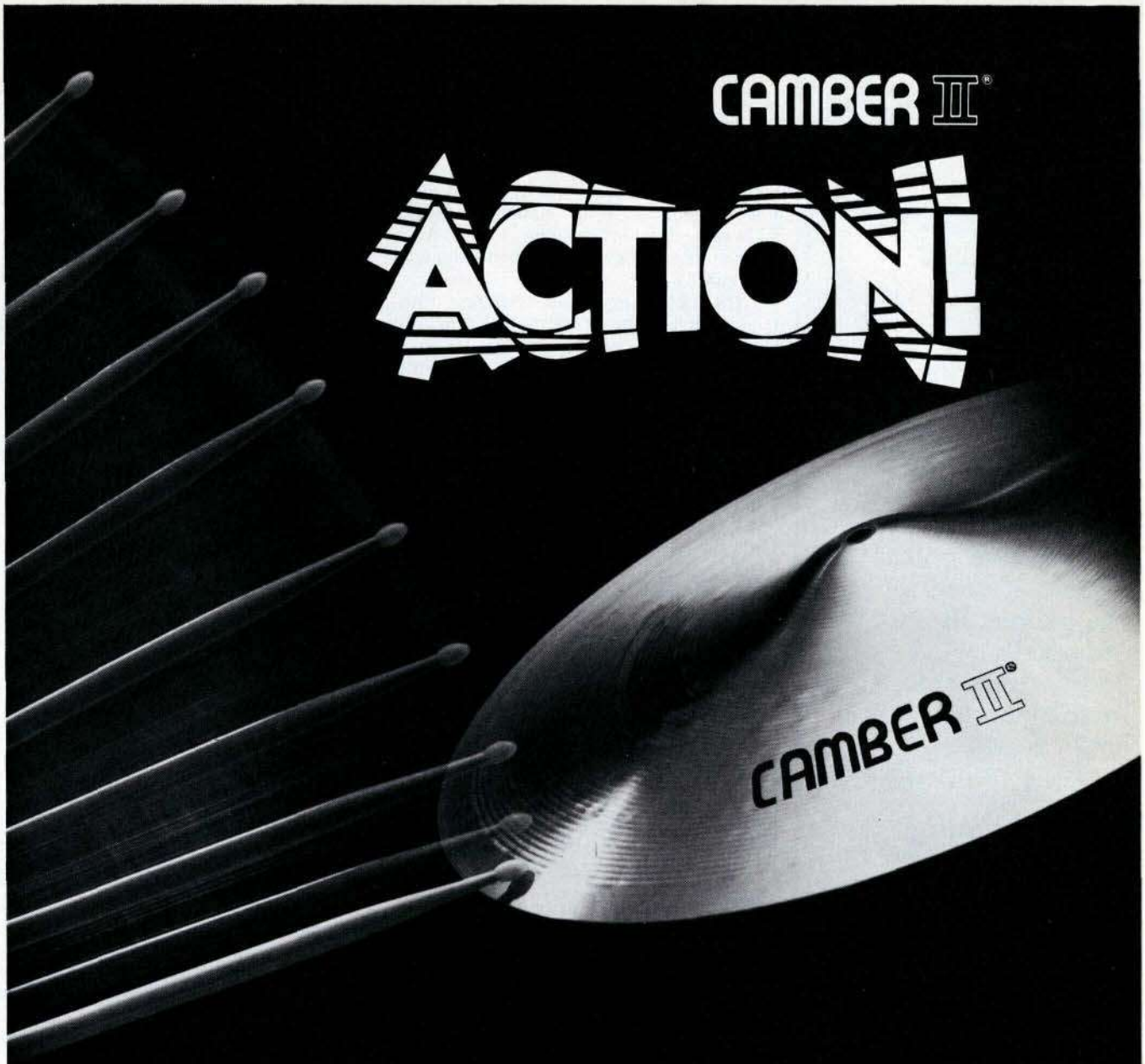


Fig. 8: Miking a small drumset with two mini omnidirectional condenser mic's. (Another mic' goes in the kick drum.)



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under the hi-hat, and aim the snare mic' away from the hi-hat for better isolation. An alternative technique is to tape a miniature condenser mic' to the side of the snare drum, so it "looks at" the top head over the rim.

Hi-hat. Usually, the snare microphone picks up enough hi-hat. But if you want to mike the hi-hat separately, try a cardioid condenser microphone about three to eight inches above the hi-hat, aiming away from the snare drum for isolation. Aim the mic' at the side of the hi-hat farthest from you (Figure 3).

If the hi-hat needs more "sizzle," turn up the treble control for the hi-hat microphone on your recording mixer. If your mixer has more sophisticated tone controls (equalization), try boosting a little at 10 or 12kHz.

Toms. Tom-toms can be miked individually or with one mic' between each pair of toms. One typical technique uses a cardioid dynamic mic' placed one inch above the rim, angled down about 45 degrees toward the drumhead (Figure 4). Again, the cardioid's proximity effect gives a full sound. An alternative is to tape mini condenser mic's to the toms, peeking over the top rim of each drum.

Tom-tom mic's often pick up too much *leakage* (off-mic' sound) from the cymbals. To reduce cymbal leakage and improve isolation, take the cardioid tom-tom mic's and aim their "dead" rear at the cymbals, or remove the bottom heads from the toms and mike them from the inside, a few inches from the head and slightly off center (Figure 5). This also keeps the mic's out of your way when you're playing.

Kick drum. Kick drums are generally recorded with no front head, or with a front head into which a hole has been cut (to allow access to the inside of the drum, and also to allow air to escape). Lay a blanket inside the drum, pressing against the batter head to dampen the vibration and "tighten" the beat.

A microphone commonly used in the kick drum is a cardioid dynamic type with an extended low-frequency response. For starters, place it inside the drum on a boom, a few inches from the beater (Figure 6). Mic' placement close to the beater picks up a hard beater sound with lots of attack; off-center placement picks up more head tone; and farther away picks up a boomier shell sound. (A miniature condenser mic' or PZM can be taped to the inside of the shell on top, about halfway in.) If your recording mixer has tone controls (equalization), you can cut around 300 to 600 Hz to remove the "cardboard" sound and boost around 2.5 kHz to 5 kHz for extra click or snap. A wooden beater also adds attack. How should the recorded kick drum sound? Well, they don't call it *kick* drum for nothing. The drum should produce a powerful low-end thump plus an attack transient.

Cymbals. Place two cardioid condenser mic's one to three feet above the cymbals. The overhead mic's can be angled apart for better isolation (Figure 7). Place them in a position to pick up all the cymbals equally. Usually, not much volume is needed on the overhead mic's, since the cymbals leak into the drum mic's. Recorded cymbals should sound crisp and smooth, not dull, crashy, or harsh.

Ambience. Ambience mic's are microphones placed fairly distant from an instrument—about 20 feet—to pick up room acoustics (ambience). When mixed with the close-up mic's, they give an "open," "loose," "airy" sound to the drums. You can use an omni condenser microphone or a PZM attached to a wall.

Other techniques. PZMs allow some unusual opportunities for drumset miking. You can strap one on your chest, tape them to hard-surfaced goboes (panels) surrounding the set, or put them on the floor under the toms and in the kick drum.

If you're limited in the number of microphones you can spare for the drums, the setup shown in Figure 8 uses only two miniature omni condenser mic's and one kick drum mic'. It works well on small drumsets. Tape one mini mic' to the rim of the left rack tom near the snare drum. This mic' picks up the left tom, snare, hi-hat, and cymbals. (Experiment with placement to get a good balance among these instruments.) Tape the other mini mic' to the rim of the right rack tom nearest the floor tom. This mic' picks up the right rack tom, floor tom, and cymbals. The third mic' goes in the kick drum. With a little bass and treble boost, you'll be surprised at the good sound and even coverage you can achieve with this simple setup.

As shown earlier in Figure 1, you can even use a single mini mic' to pick up the entire set. A second mic' is placed in the kick drum.

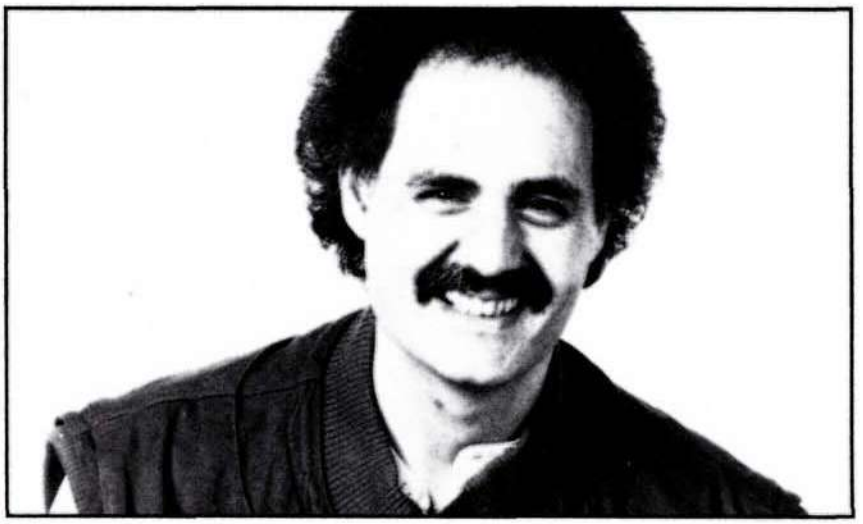
Electronic drums or drum machines are recorded directly into the mixing console. If the drum machine sounds too mechanical, you can make the sound more interesting by combining real drum sounds with the machine's signal. The machine can play a steady background while you do other things.

When miking drums on stage for sound reinforcement, you don't need a forest of unsightly mic' stands and booms. You can use short mic' holders (such as LP's *Claw* or the Hardy *Stand-off)* that clip onto the drum rims and cymbal stands. For club work, the cymbals usually cut through everything, so they need not be miked.

We've covered some typical microphone techniques for the drumset. These are just suggestions to serve as a starting point. After trying them out, invent your own techniques! If you can capture the power and excitement of the drums, you've made a successful recording.

In The Current Issue Of MODERN PERCUSSIONIST

A Conversation With
David Friedman



One of the most innovative vibes/marimba players today, Friedman discusses his philosophies about improvisation and talks about his work as a solo performer, as well as his experiences with Double Image.

Rocking With
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From Roxy Music to Kiss, percussionist Jimmy Maelen has lent his talents to a variety of concerts, recordings, and jingles. He discusses his career and gives tips on working in the studio.

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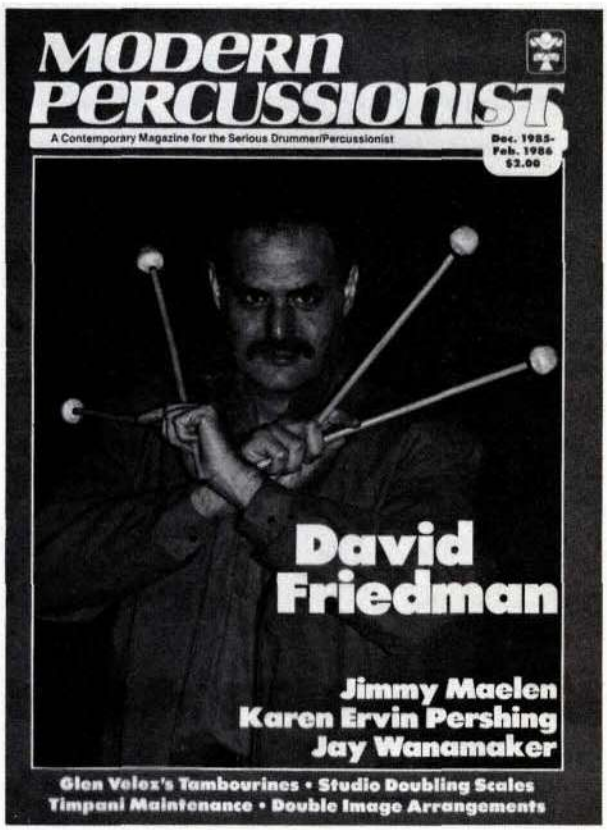

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Haynes continued from page 21

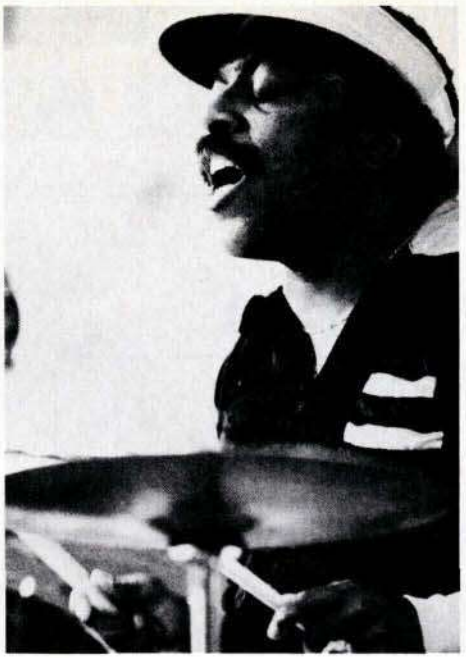
ductor stopped the band and told the drummer, 'I don't want any of those Roy Haynes drum breaks.' [laughs]

"If I'm playing that way, the musicians have the beat inside them anyway. I prefer playing with musicians who are up to that level. If *you feel* that *[snaps a beat],* you don't have to play it. It's *there.* It's like a weighing scale. You do more on one side, but it evens off on the other."

On a recent date at New York's Blue Note backing Jon Hendricks' group, Roy could be seen occasionally removing his left foot from the hi-hat pedal entirely and resting it on the pedal frame. "It's just a habit," says Roy. But it is significant that he is comfortable to be physically, as well as musically, free from the foot's anchor. "That's something I've been doing for a long time. I hope it looks good," he laughs. "I just feel comfortable doing it. The 2 and 4 is within us. If I'm playing with somebody, I like to keep it smooth. I shouldn't have to give someone 2 and 4 each time. The *heartbeat* should take care of that—the *natural* feeling."

That's something Roy has plenty of. He considers his natural feeling to be the source of his talent. And as a natural, he largely perfected his craft without formal training, except for a summer term at Boston Conservatory in 1944. "You can get your own technique that's not in the book by doing it over and over, and *knowing*

Photo by Charles Stewart



what you're doing," he says. "It just happens as it happens. At least for me, that's how it has worked." That special natural feeling is expressed with an impressively clean and sophisticated technique.

While calling Roy to plan a follow-up interview, I point out to him that we didn't get a chance to discuss technique on our previous meeting. "Good," he replies with a laugh. Roy's nonverbal approach to technique partially explains why he chooses not to teach. But for those drum scholars who deserve his wisdom, observing Roy play live is an education in rhythm-section control, four-limb independence, motivic ingenuity, dynamic sensitivity, and driving energy. Watching his right hand alone is worth a college credit in cymbal riding.

Roy's penchant for progressive style resulted in artistic dilemmas even as early on as 1951: Duke Ellington had invited him to join his band, but Roy felt it was best to decline the offer. "I was with Bird at the time. I had played with a big band before, so I knew that, during that period, a lot of the older guys were very hard on drummers—especially drummers who were trying to do something new. When you play in a big band, you have to carry the band. You can't be constantly experimenting. So I knew the older guys in Duke's band were not going to dig that.

"I knew Duke could dig it. In fact, Duke made a big thing about that. Every time I would see him someplace, he would always mention it to me. Duke's format was great. I loved to listen to the band. But not accepting the invitation relates to what I mentioned before about 'playing Roy Haynes breaks.' "

In the '60s, Roy lead his own quartet, which featured Frank Strozier on reeds, pianist Kenny Barron, and bassist Larry Ridley, in addition to keeping busy with tenorman Stan Getz. Out of the immense library of discs to which Roy has contributed, he considers a certain Stan Getz cut to be one of his finest. "The tune was, 'I'm Late, I'm Late,' from the album *Focus.* Eddie Sauter did the arrangements. There weren't supposed to be drums on that. So they had me play in the spaces when there was nothing happening. And Stan and I traded bars. It was very interesting."

At a time when many bandleaders were not yet comfortable with the liberated rhythmic styles, John Coltrane was seeking them out. "At one time, Coltrane used to come up to where I was playing. I had Dolphy on sax and Reggie Workman on bass. We were playing a place in the Village, and 'Trane was working at the Vanguard. After 'Trane was finished, he would come over to our gig and sit in the back. Before I knew it, he had Reggie *and* Dolphy in his band."

Later, Roy followed, drumming with Coltrane during the periods when 'Trane's steady drummer, Elvin Jones, was unavailable. In J.C. Thomas' Coltrane

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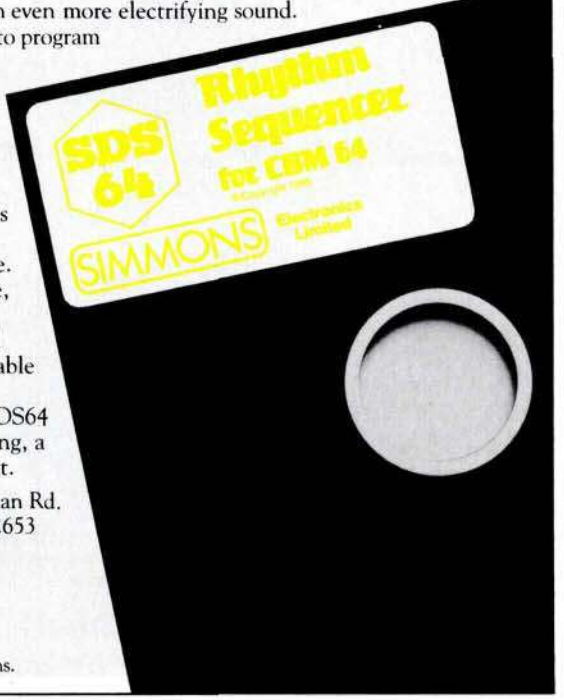

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biography, *Chasin' The Trane,* Roy speaks of the saxman's "drum fixation": "He always played off the drums. He told me the drums freed him; he didn't have to worry about chord changes. He got the freedom to play what he wanted from working directly off the drums."

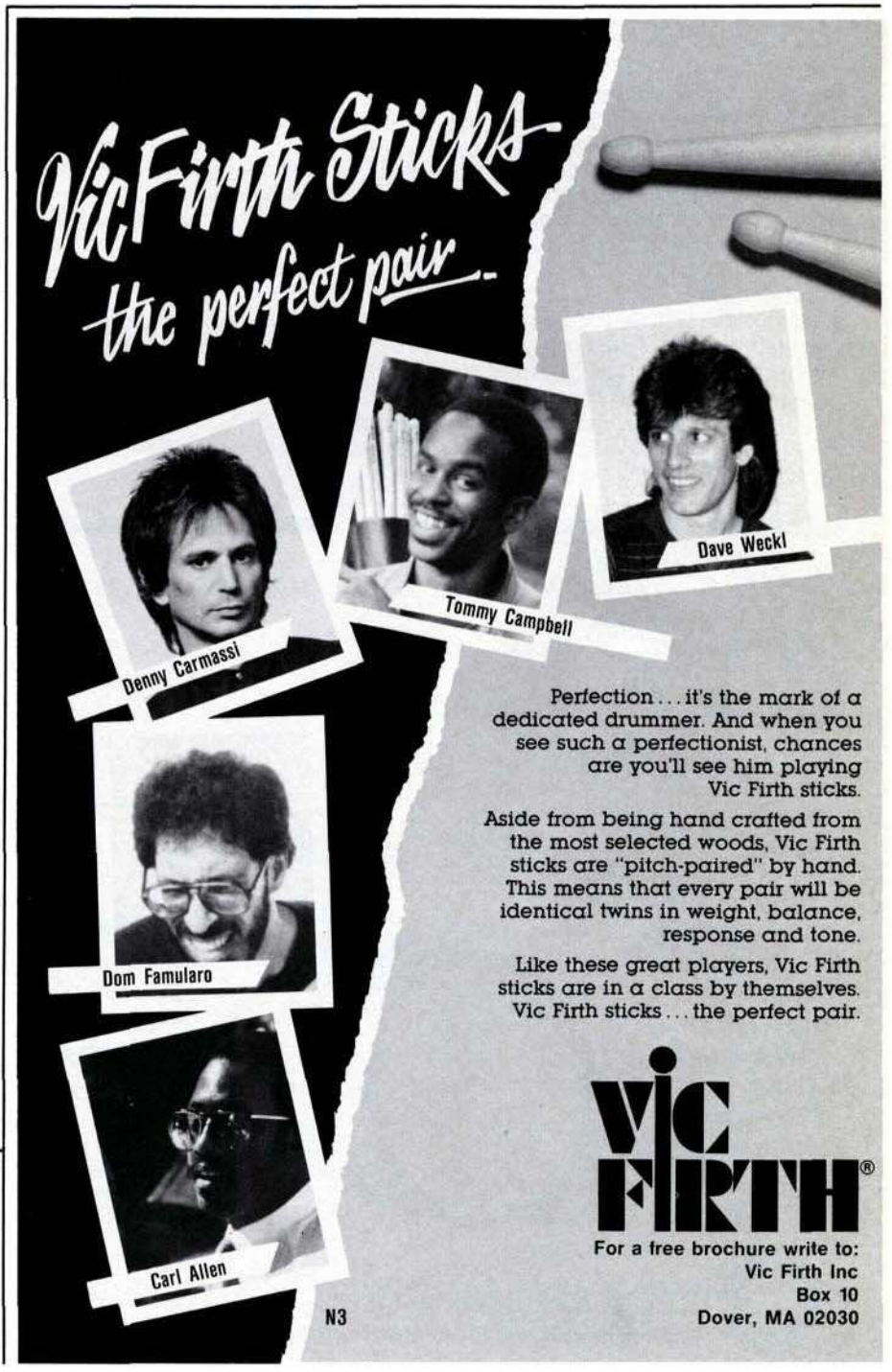
Even many jazz journalists hadn't realized, until they heard him with Coltrane, that Roy's modern drum concept had been in his hands all along. "I was playing with Coltrane in Chicago and a critic mentioned to me, 'I didn't know you could play like that!' I knew what he was trying to say, but I didn't like his approach. So I said, 'Well, if you didn't know, you should have asked Elvin.' [laughs] In other words, Elvin knew me a long time ago. He knew me before he came to New York. We met around 1951, when I was playing the Michigan State Fair with Ella Fitzgerald, and Elvin's brother, Hank, was on piano. I went to Detroit by train, and Elvin took me by the train station to get my drums. We hung out during that period. He would be working someplace, and I'd come by his gig and sit in. Later, Elvin came to New York and became very popular.

"Anyway, this critic called up John Coltrane, and John ended up writing something in a magazine about his group. John made a statement on my drumming that ended up on the liner notes of *To The Beat Of A Different Drummer."* The "critic" was Don DeMichael, former *down beat* editor, who followed 'Trane's career closely. DeMichael and Coltrane coauthored a feature in *down beat* chronicling the quartet's progress. Coltrane's definitive words on Roy were: "Roy Haynes is one of the best drummers I've worked with. I always tried to get him when Elvin Jones wasn't able to make it. There's a difference between them. Elvin's feeling was a driving force. Roy's was more of a spreading, a permeating. Well, they both have a way of spreading the rhythm, but they're different. They're both very accomplished. You can feel what they're doing and can get with it."

To The Beat Of A Different Drummer: The Mastery Of John Coltrane Volume II (Impulse Records) is a tribute to Roy that includes classic 'Trane cuts and previously unreleased tracks that feature Roy on drums exclusively. The double album also serves as an official effort by Impulse to set the record straight: Some previous Impulse albums had miscredited the musicians. Elvin Jones has been credited for several cuts on which Roy actually played, and *Different Drummer* corrects the errors.

Several historic Eric Dolphy recording dates went to tape in the '60s supported by Roy's deft touch. On tunes like "Bird's Mother," from the album, *Far Cry,* one can hear Roy cooking away, complementing Dolphy's quirky, broken-up blowing on the head section, but always maintaining the straight-ahead drive. Roy's rhythmic response to Eric's sax serves as the perfect bridge between Dolphy's traditional background and his leanings towards the avant-garde angularity that he evolved into on the later albums, such as *Out To Lunch.*

Like Parker and 'Trane, Dolphy's controversial style in his later period rattled some traditional jazz fans and critics, and inspired others to compare his groundbreaking influence to Charlie Parker's. "A lot of the younger people writing today like to compare Eric Dolphy to Charlie Parker," Roy says, "but you can't really compare the two. I was with both of them. Eric wasn't to be compared to Charlie Parker. It wasn't *that* type of genius. He was talented and studied, but Charlie Parker was just a rare *person.* Dolphy probably would have become even greater than he did, if he had lived longer. He was still growing.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"I knew Dolphy before he played the way people remember now. I knew him when he was playing in a style closer to Bird's. We were together a lot—even before he came to New York to get a record contract. He wanted me to make his first record date, and I didn't know what he had in mind for music. What came out just happened. He didn't describe too much of what he wanted me to do. In fact, if I had played a lot of the tunes we recorded longer, I probably would have played different things on them. But we just went in the studio and became familiar with the tunes there on the spot."

Tracing the entire recorded Haynes oeuvre is a big job. Roy has played so many important album sessions that he can't quite recall many of the titles right off the cuff. At his Long Island home, a small record collection of no more than 40 albums sits below a turntable. "I don't even have most of my own records around. I have them at another house. Otherwise, everybody comes in and wants me to play through all my records," he laughs.

Of the albums Roy recorded as a leader, he names *We Three,* featuring pianist Phineas Newborn and bassist Paul Chambers, as one of his favorites. Originally released in 1958, it has been recently reissued by Prestige/New Jazz Records to Roy's delight. "I got a call one night from a DJ who was on the air. He said, 'I'm playing your record, *Out Of The Afternoon.*' After that he played something from *We Three,* and it blew my mind! I wanted to call him back up and thank him. When people do things like that, it just touches you. I didn't even know that *We Three* was on the play list. And I heard it again the next day. It gives you a little boost—especially to hear something that old come back. You know, *We Three* was very big in Japan.

"Stewart Troop, who writes for *Newsday,* called me the other day. He had received a questionnaire from a publication that wanted to know his favorite recordings from 1960 until now. He wanted to put in *We Three,* but he wasn't sure if it was recorded before 1960. I couldn't answer him, because I didn't know for sure either," Roy laughs.

Other recommended samples of Roy's work as a leader include the albums *Hip Ensemble, Senyah* (Mainstream); *Thank You, Thank You, Vistalite* (Galaxy); and *Out Of The Afternoon* (Impulse). Notable recordings as a sideman include *Charlie Parker—The Verve Years, 1952-54* (Verve); *Lester Young—The Aladdin Sessions* (Blue Note); *Outward Bound, Out There,* and *Far Cry* (Prestige/New Jazz) with Eric Dolphy; *At The Five Spot* (Milestone) and *Misterioso* (Columbia) with Thelonious Monk; *Sarah Vaughan* (Trip); *Selflessness* and *Impressions* (Impulse) with John Coltrane; *Miles Davis Band* (Prestige); *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs* (Solid State) with Chick Corea; *Times Square* (ECM) and *Duster* (RCA) with Gary Burton; *Blues And The Abstract Truth* (Impulse) with Oliver Nelson; *Barefoot Boy* (Flying Dutchman) with Larry Coryell; and *Stan Getz* (Prestige). Ten points go to any collectors aware that Roy also played on Ray Charles' R&B hit, "One Mint Julep."

With so many perfectly cut gems in the Haynes discography, there are bound to be a few tracks in the rough. Roy recalls one such track with amusement. "I remember one record I made with Bud Powell, Sonny Rollins, and Fats Navarro in 1949. We played an original of Bud's called 'Wail.' After the solos, I played the bridge, and the horns came in at the wrong place. When I went to Japan, fans would be debating over the record, saying, 'No! This is wrong. He should have come in there!' [laughs] It was actually Fats Navarro who lead Sonny Rollins in. After we listened to the playback, we didn't have any more time to remake the record. So Bud Powell said, 'Awww, people will listen to it and think we're a bunch of geniuses!' "

Like many other jazz drummers of his generation who prefer the natural recorded sound of drums, Roy is dissatisfied with the controlled drum sound that has become standard in today's studios. "A lot of studios now would rather use their own drums. When I go into a studio with my drums open, it takes a while before we can come to any agreement about the sound. I don't keep them *wide* open, because studios are not geared for that today. I haven't been to Rudy Van Gelder's studio recently, but that was one of the few studios I knew that had a good drum sound. The sound there was tremendous. The drum sounded like a drum.

"I was recently in the studio and did a track with the Manhattan Transfer. But I went in and the drum sound was terrible. The Van Gelder days were different. It wasn't like a studio. It was like playing in a church. It looked like a cathedral inside—with a high wooden ceiling. When I was with Galaxy Records, they had their own studio, and the drums sounded terrible there also."

The Roy Haynes Hip Ensemble was a powerful quintet formed in 1969, originally fronted by gifted tenorman George Adams and trumpeter Charles Sullivan, two outstanding brassmen who perfectly complemented the commanding spontaneity of Roy's drumming. Although artistically strong, the band didn't attract the

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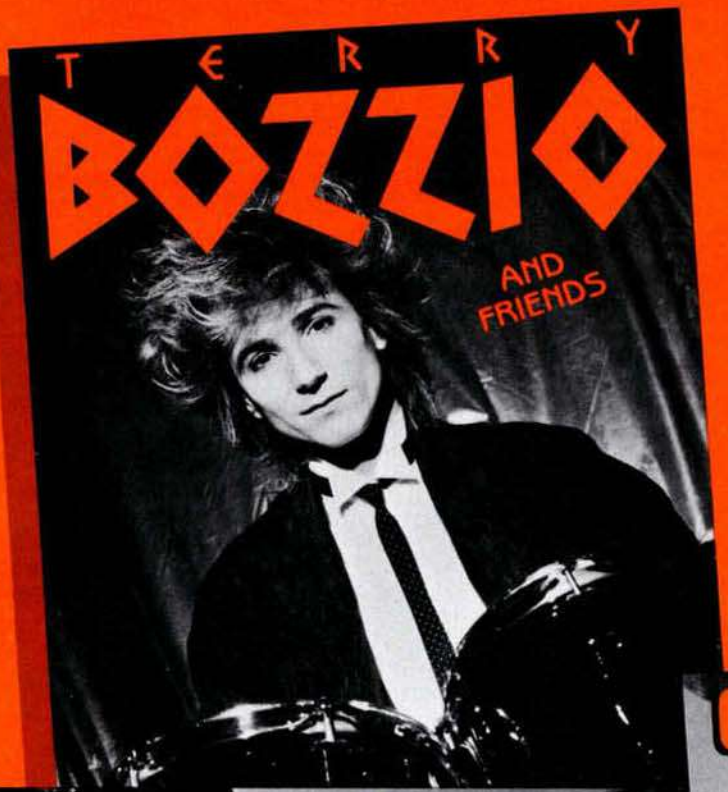

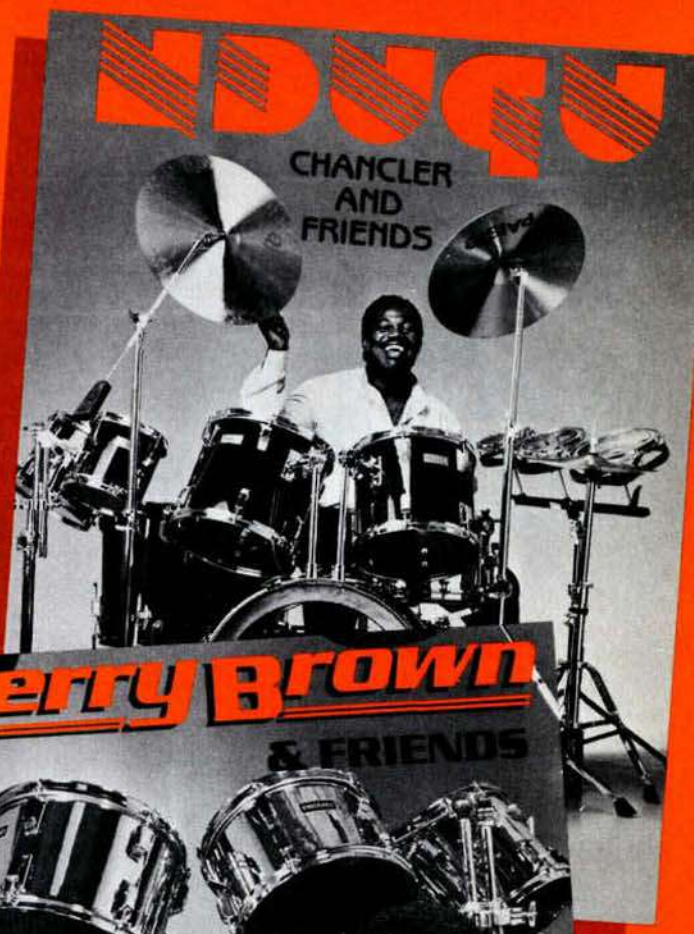

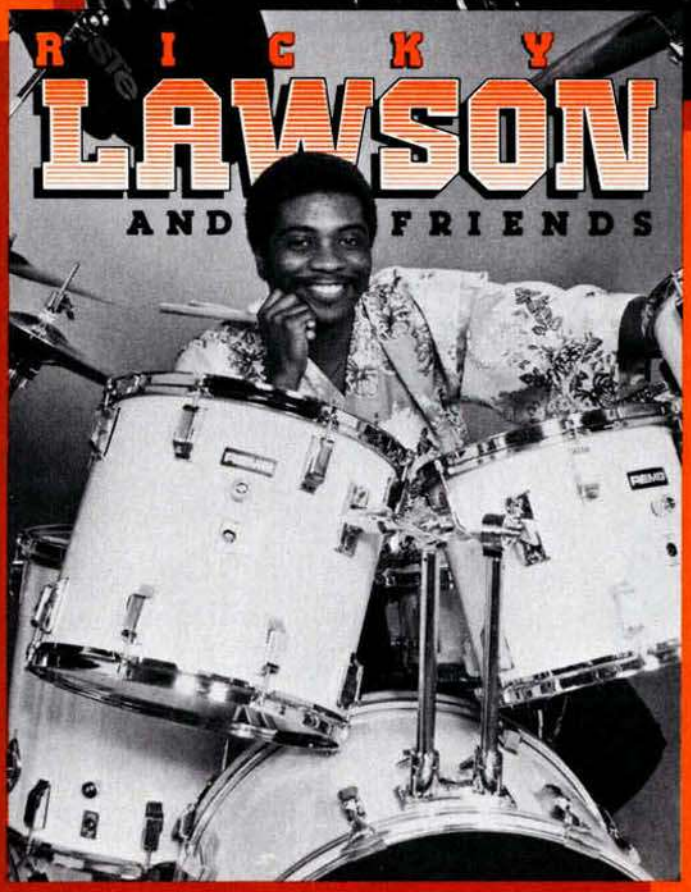

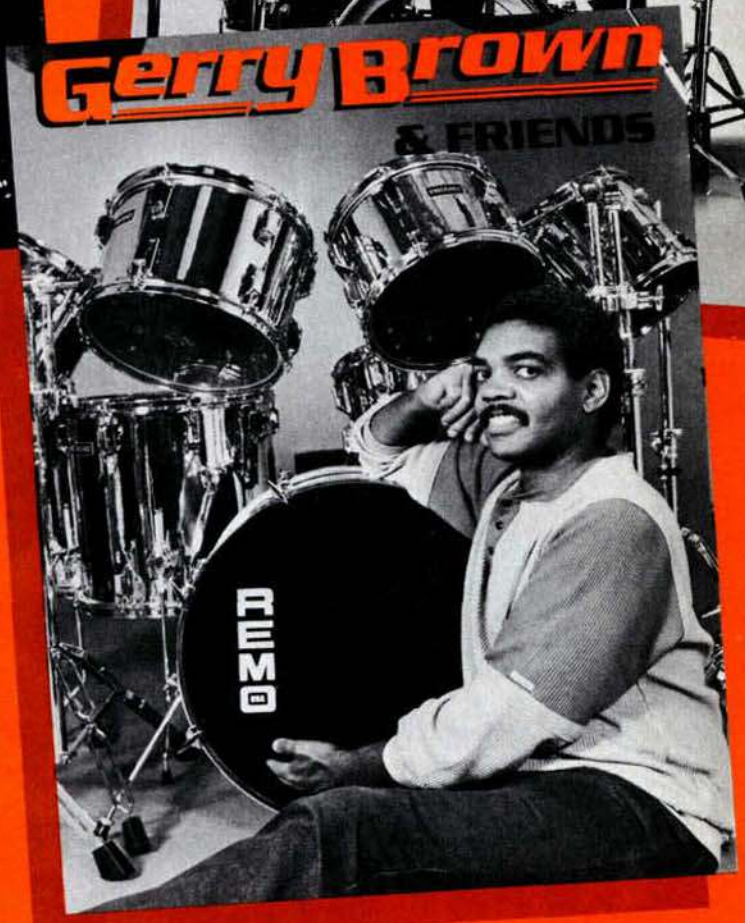

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media and record-buying public attention that it deserved.

"Now that I look back, maybe if I stayed at it, the Hip Ensemble would have pushed through, with the right people handling it. It could have happened, because we had some great moments. Our first gig was one or two weeks at an acid rock place on 46th Street called Steve Paul's The Scene. Jimi Hendrix came down on our last night. I wanted him to sit in. He would come up to the bandstand, talk, and buy us a bottle of champagne. It was a great feeling.

"Another time we were playing in Harlem at a club called Count Basie's around 1969. Stevie Wonder came by and sat in on my drums. It *blew my mind!* I keep my drums open. I don't have them padded the way they do today in the studios. You can find any of the notes on my drums on the piano. It's not just a thud. It's a musical sound, and I dig that. So Stevie was knocked out by my drums. He said, 'What brand of drums are these?' He was thrilled, man. And his concept was *different.* He killed me. It was one of the exciting moments of the Hip Ensemble.

"Another exciting time I remember was at the Newport In New York Jazz Festival around 1971. The lineup of the Ensemble at that time was George on sax, Hannibal Marvin Peterson on Trumpet, Carl Schroeder on piano, and Don Pate on bass. The show was at Carnegie Hall, and the bill was Weather Report, Archie Shepp's group, The Tony Williams Lifetime, and the Hip Ensemble. We had a rehearsal at The Needle's Eye, and when we got to Carnegie Hall, we *burned.* We got a standing ovation.

"One time I was playing with the Hip Ensemble in Paris at a club, and there was a tune in which I played the same tom-tom beat all the way through. The drumbeat was the theme of the song. I went into my solo, and I started out with my theme. Then I would vary, and then go back to the theme throughout. All of a sudden, a *tall* African guy raised his arms and went into a dance with the drums that blew my mind. Joe Newman happened to be in the audience. He came over afterwards and said, 'You played *something* that got to that guy!' There *is* something to the beat.

"One of the many times I've gone to Japan to play was with the Hip Ensemble. The first time I went to Japan was in the '60s with a group called Four Big Drummers, which was Max Roach, Shelly Manne, Philly Joe Jones, and myself. Now, *that* was very exciting. We would open up all together. Each drummer would exchange four bars several times, and then we all played with the rhythm section."

For most of his career, Roy has played Ludwig drums, and he remains a long-time endorser. Up through the '60s, Roy commonly used a standard small jazz kit, but was later one of the few jazz players who expanded to experiment with a large, multi-tom set. He now prefers playing smaller kits once again.

"I had a ball when I was playing all those drums, but I'm not really into that now. I wanted to get back to the intimacy of a small set. I played in Switzerland with Trio Music last summer, and Paiste had big racks of equipment there—bells, chimes, cymbals. When I played my solo, it was nice to get a lot of different sounds. It changed the whole dimension, and I do enjoy that also.

"Everyplace Trio Music goes, it's in the contract for the place to have a timpani there. At most of the concerts, they were pedal timpani. I approach it like another drum—the depth of the timpani itself—and I change it to get the different highs and lows. Some nights we had some very good timpani that I could work with: The pedals were loose, so I could move them up and down. Some nights I'd get a timpani, and the pedal wouldn't even move."

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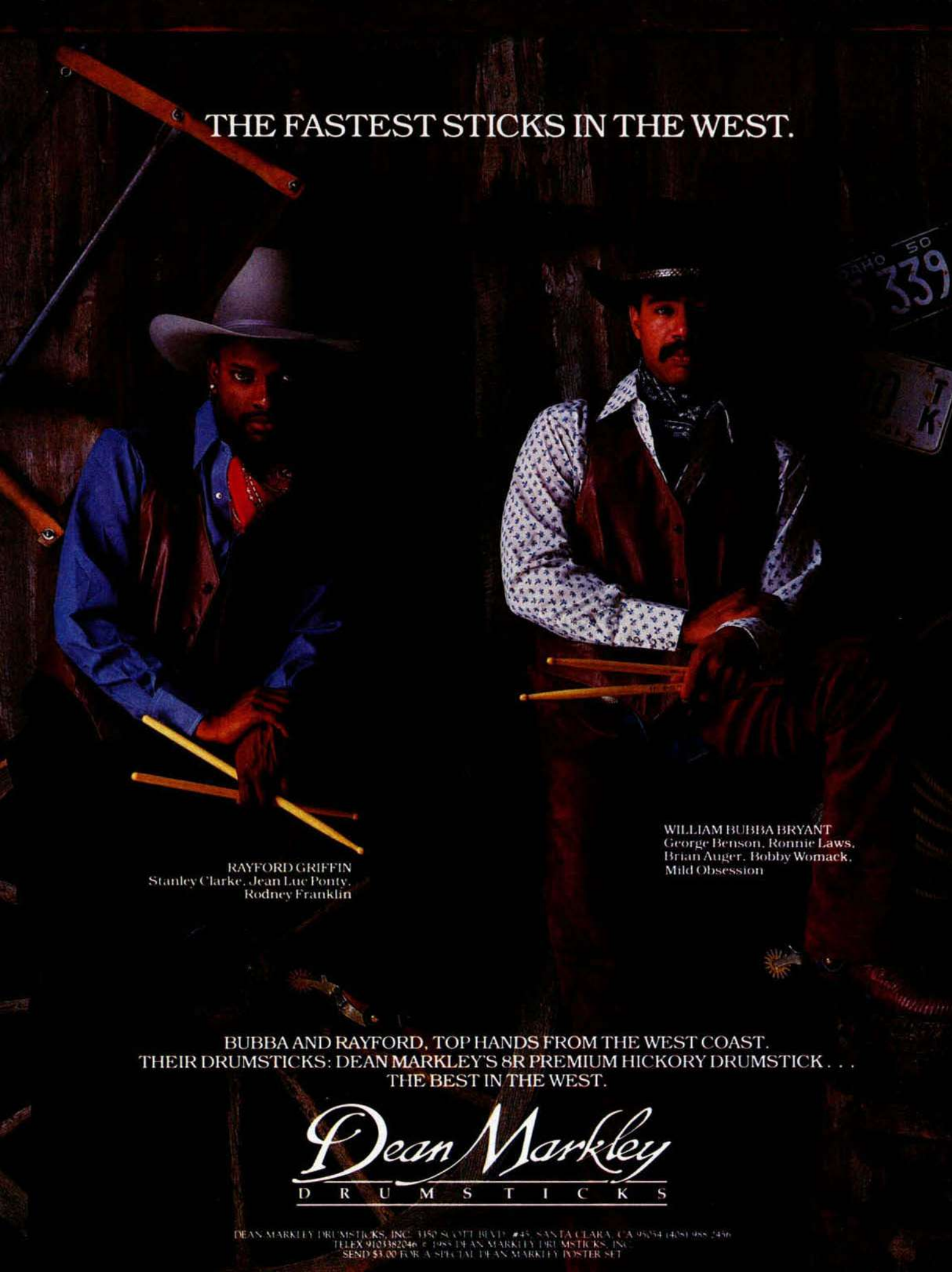
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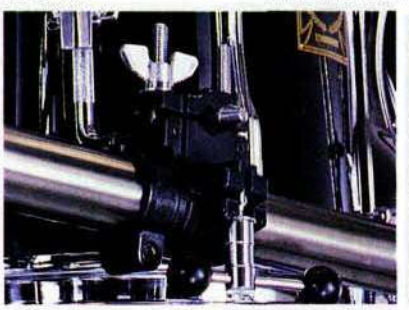

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Roy's ongoing projects. In July, they completed a successful U.S. and Canadian festival tour, and a live album is in the planning.

The White House first resounded with Roy's beat during Johnson's administration, when Roy performed with Stan Getz. More recently, Trio Music was featured in a televised White House concert by Reagan's invitation. "They didn't want to let me in. [laughs] The first day, they just asked my name, and they checked the list. So, the second day, when we were going to tape, I didn't bring my I.D. This time, there was a *different* guard. He wouldn't let me in! I had to rush back to the hotel to get my I.D. The security was much stiffer than when I first played the White House. Miroslav and I went towards the men's room, and a female guard reached for her gun!"

This master drummer is also a man with stylish flair. In his driveway sits a favorite toy: a Bricklin sportscar. Sleek and DeLorean-like with gull-wing doors, the auto is a collector's item. ("It's the sixth one made and worth a lot of money by now.") Roy is content to roam his house in casual wear, but when he's heading out for a gig, his clothes match the Bricklin's speed, with a fine taste that once earned him a slot on *Esquire's,* Best Dressed List. Jazz patrons pay a lot of money for a night of music these days, and seeing Roy at the Blue Note, backing the band in a striking burgundy suit, made the evening feel just a little more festive. Having always been a clotheshorse, Roy is pleased by the trend for young players, exemplified by leaders such as Wynton Marsalis, to put on the ritz when they perform.

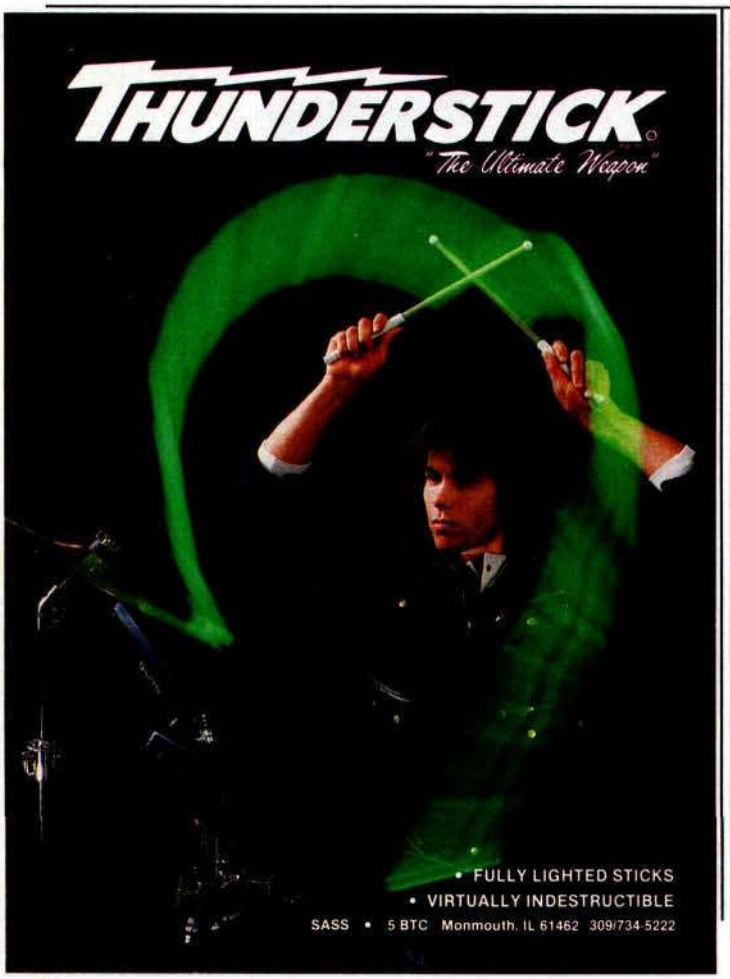
"People are into visuals. They're looking at the person out front as well as listening today. Years ago, a lot of bands would wear tuxedos. They always looked good. In the '60s, when they started wearing jeans, that mainly came from the rock players. And then it caught on with youngsters who were playing any kind of music. I like to feel relaxed when I'm playing, but when *I* started playing, I *had* to wear a tie.

"I like the idea of the youngsters getting clean today, because it reminds me of the older days. Even when Coltrane started, everyone had at least a jacket on. I like that presentation—not necessarily a tie, but something to look good in, rather than just some funky old jeans. I like to see everyone look good as well as sound good."

As a leader in those two categories, Roy's recognition is well deserved. But he finds that the recognition game takes funny twists in the music world. "I was playing a club called The Tin Palace one week when The Rolling Stones were playing Madison Square Garden. Charlie Watts came down to listen to me at the club one night. Before this, the waitresses had thought, 'Roy Haynes—commeci, comme ca.' But when *Charlie* came down to see me, they were all excited. As soon as I walked in, they were saying, 'The drummer from The Rolling Stones is here!' I thought, 'Big deal, I don't even know who the hell he is.' They pointed him out to me—dressed in a white suit. Anyway, he stayed all night. He knew me from a long time ago, but I didn't really know him. So, the next night, he sent a limousine with four tickets for me. Suddenly, I became a big hero, [laughs] It's a bitch that things like that have to happen. Today, there's more of that. You don't have to be really a good player. You just have to be hooked up to that right thing or the in thing for the period. There are a lot of good young players, though. I don't even know some of their names.

"In fact, when I was watching Mick Jagger perform, for the first 15 minutes, I was turned off. But after about 20 minutes, I got into what he was doing—his energy and the *way* he was doing what he was doing. It knocked me out. Then we became friends afterwards. One time when I was rehearsing with Trio Music, they were at the same studio rehearsing, and Charlie, Mick and I talked for a long time. Mick goes out to places like the Vanguard and listens to whoever is appearing."

Although Roy enjoys listening to a wide variety of music, when it comes down to playing, he explains simply that rock "is not my cup of tea. I watched the Live Aid concerts, and some parts were good,



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whereas I found other parts amusing. I have nothing against rock, but for myself, I would get bored if I had to continuously play that same volume throughout one tune. Some of the rock drummers beat the sound *in,* rather than drawing the sound *out* of the drums."

Although jazz musicians rarely receive as fair a share of media'splash as rock musicians do, the impact of Roy and his peers on music is a long-term influence celebrated worldwide that has inspired musicians through four decades. Two years after Boston's Roy Haynes Day, Roy was again honored at New York's Loeb Auditorium with A Roy Haynes Tribute night sponsored as part of the Highlights In Jazz series. Musicians who have worked with Roy throughout the years came to perform in his honor. And many who hadn't been hired for the concert sat in and contributed their musical .thanks to the influential drummer.

Last July, Roy participated in a concert tribute to his musical colleague, the late Bud Powell, at Manhattan's Town Hall theater. Powell's ahead-of-his-time boast turned out to be an understatement. What Bud *should* have said about himself and his fellow musicians is: "Other musicians will be picking up on what we're playing ten years from now—and *still* learning from it 25 years after *that!"*

"I went to Rome to play a while ago," Roy says, "and as soon as I got there, I saw huge signs for our show in the middle of the downtown area saying, 'Charlie Parker Tribute.' Now that made me feel good. That was very inspiring."

Upcoming plans for Roy include freelance dates, Trio Music concerts, and a trip to Europe. He also plans to remobilize the latest edition of his own quartet, which features Ralph Moore on tenor, Ed Howard on bass, and Hideki Takao on piano. When he is not juggling projects, the energetic drummer enjoys driving into Manhattan to catch up on the latest music uptown and downtown, or relaxing at breezy Jones Beach, located a convenient ten minutes from his home. "It's so colorful here. It reminds me of the Riviera," he says squinting out at the tanned bathers strolling on an especially sunny day. "But you know, I also really dig the beach on cloudy days. That's when you meet a lot of interesting people—people into the Arts and people with open minds."

This time around, when Roy leads his own quartet, he plans to allow himself more break time than in the Hip Ensemble years. "Over the last couple of years, there have been less headaches, because I work less and I have been fortunate to have good players. When I had the Hip Ensemble, I had to be a psychiatrist, a father, a brother—I had to be there. But I want to enjoy the rest of my life. I like to do other things so that I can breathe a little bit, and then do gigs every now and then with my own group.

"Sometimes I get away from my drums for a while. But I am constantly playing all the time within—constantly. I'm thinking drums. I'm moving. My toes are wiggling time. I'm always into the rhythm of the drums.

"Sometimes, when I'm not playing drums, I'm often thinking of lyrics. I dig lyrics. Some people say I know lyrics because I had played with a singer for so long, but I had always been into lyrics before that. I find that Dexter Gordon is like that, too. When I saw him play—before he played a ballad, he would recite a chorus of the lyrics—*recite* it, not sing it. Lester Young was into lyrics, too. He would play records during the day in his hotel room and sing the lyrics."

Perhaps it is the silent rhythms swinging through his body and the lyrics lilting through his head that keep Roy such a cool and confident person. For much of his career, he has met challenges with the same not-to-worry sense of adventure as the young man who hustled aboard Louis Armstrong's bus and the newcomer to New York who strode headlong into gigs with the world's best.

One telling incident of Roy's venturesome spirit took place a few years ago at the Kool Jazz Festival in Atlanta. Panic was bubbling backstage as Ike & Tina Turner readied themselves to take the stage, and their drummer was still nowhere to be found. Although Ike and Tina's music was far from Roy's main bag, he stepped in cold and opened the show, driving the hardest of hard-driving soul/R&B reviews. Roy recalls the event with nonchalance. For him, it wasn't a pressure-under-the-collar situation. He approached it like he had approached swinging behind the unpredictable Charlie Parker: listen and "just grasp."

Driving back from the beach, Roy misses the first exit, and as a result, we are later trapped in a beach exodus traffic jam. It doesn't seem to bother him, though, and he scans the radio, listening to samples of everything across the dial. Pulling off at the next exit, Roy swings a quick left onto a narrow street and finds himself suddenly wedged, flank to flank, between a parked vehicle and an oncoming car. With only two inches leeway between his car and Roy's the other driver stopped dead, unsure of what to do. Roy leans out the window with a smile and announces to the astonished driver, "Everything's beautiful!" as he cruises through without a wince.

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by Jamey Haddad

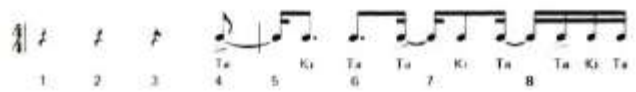
South Indian Rhythmic System:

Part 2

Part I of this article appeared in the January issue of MD. It is important that you understand that material before attempting to learn the material in Part 2.

LESSON 4: REDUCTION PATTERN IN ADI TALA (EIGHT-BEAT CYCLE)

These are phrase reductions calculated to end just before 1 of Adi Tala. Line A takes the phrase TaKiTa and gives each syllable 3/4 of a beat (Ta - - Ki - - Ta - -). Then, reduce each syllable value to 1/2 beat (Ta - Ki - Ta -). And finally, reduce to 1/4 beat per syllable (Ta Ki Ta). You're reducing the phrase by 1/4 beat after each TaKiTa.

You can calculate these lessons or any of your own ideas to finish on the 1 or just before the 1, as these lessons do, simply by starting your idea on 1 of Adi Tala. Then, count the beats that are left in the cycle when your idea is completed. Next, place that gap (or rest) at the start of the idea. Line A starts with a 3 1/2-beat gap. If you wanted this line to end on 1 instead of the 1/4 beat before 1, you would add that 1/4 beat to the 3 1/2-beat gap. You would then start your idea after a 3 3/4-beat gap. If you wanted to think of this line in Western terms, one cycle of Adi Tala would be equal to two bars of 4/4 time, and TaKiTa would first be played (or said) as three dotted 8th notes, followed by three 8th notes, followed by three 16th notes. You would start on the & of 4, or the upbeat of 4.

If you learn the names of the syllables and understand the basic concepts of the lessons, you'll find no need for Western notation. The names of the rhythms will automatically give you the phrasing once you become familiar with the different lengths of the gaps.

A Tisra is the Indian word for 3

Ta– – – Di– – – Ki– – – Na– – – Thom– – – = 5 beats

B Ta– – Di– – Ki– – Na– – Thom– – = 3 3/4 beats

C Ta– Di– Ki– Na– Thom– = 2 1/2 beats

D Ta Di Ki Na Thom [to Ta, top, or end 3rd time] = 1 1/4 beats

E Ta Di Ki Na Thom [Karvai, or rest] = 1 1/4 beats

A+B+C+D+E = 13 3/4 x 3 = 41 1/4

Minus line E third time – 1 1/4

40 beats

B Chaturasa is the Indian word for 4

– – – – – – – – Ta– –Ka – –Di– –Mi– – Ta–Ka– Di–Mi– TaKaDiMi

C Kanda is the Indian word for 5

– –Ta– –Di– – Ki– –Na – –Thom– –Ta–Di –Ki–Na –Thom–Ta DiKiNaThom

If you want to apply the concept of the lessons to include 7 and 9, the syllables are:

Misra for 7: Ta Ka Di Mi Ta Ki Ta or the reverse Ta Ki Ta Ta Ka Di Mi

Sankirna for 9: Ta Ka Di Mi Ta Ka Ta Ki Ta or Ta Ka Ta Ki Ta Ta Ka Di Mi

or Ta Ka Di Mi Ta Di Ki Na Thom or Ta Di Ki Na Thom Ta Ka Di Mi

7 is most commonly used as 4+3 or 3+4; 9 is 5+4 or 4+5

LESSON 5: PHRASE REDUCTION—TIMING EXERCISE

This extends the concept of Lesson 4, specifically line C. So if you don't know that by heart, go back to it now. This lesson only uses one phrase, and that phrase gets reduced 1/4 beat after each time it is said. In this example, we use *5, TaDiKiNaThom* as in our rhythmic phrase, although the same concept of this lesson should be applied to all the numbers—3, 4, *5,* 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *TaDiKiNaThom* is said with each syllable getting a whole beat. Then, each syllable is reduced to 3/4 of a beat, then to 1/2 of a beat, and finally, to 'A of a beat in lines D and E. But line E is said silently or it could be looked at as a 1 1/4-beat rest. "Karvai" is the name for a rest or silent saying.

Then, the whole thing gets repeated two more times, without stopping, excluding line E on the third time through. The tricky part comes when you start your second and third times through the lesson, because then the top doesn't fall on 1. The *Ta* at the start of line A falls like this each time around: The first time through, the top falls on 1. The second time through, the top falls as a 1/4-beat anticipation (or like a 16th anticipation). The third time through, the top falls on the upbeat (or the &) of the beat.

This lesson should be done to the Adi Tala hand count and should be read from top to bottom in time, three times, excluding line E the third time through. The *Thom* at the end of line D will fall as the last 1/4 beat of your fifth cycle of Adi Tala, and at that point, you either start over or end on *Ta.* The lesson is 40 beats long or five cycles (5 x 8 = 40). You could also look at this as line A = five quarter notes, line B = five dotted 8th notes, line C = five 8th notes, and lines D and E = five 16th notes each.

Now that you've tried Lesson 5 using the South Indian method, here's what it looks like in Western notation. I'm not using any bar lines, and I'm writing the lesson so it looks like what it is—*a reduction.* Sing the lesson three times without stopping and end after line D. Remember to keep your Tala consistent and steady, and check your progress each time the top comes around. Since the second and third times the top doesn't fall on 1 as described earlier, if you don't keep the Tala, you'll lose your perspective *to feel* the reductions and the symmetrical proportions of these lessons.

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Compandable Vs. Linear Technology

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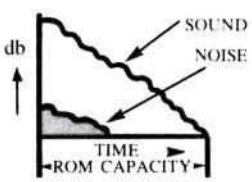

The result is that the background noise actually decreases as the sound decays.

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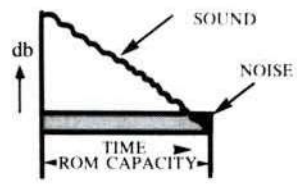

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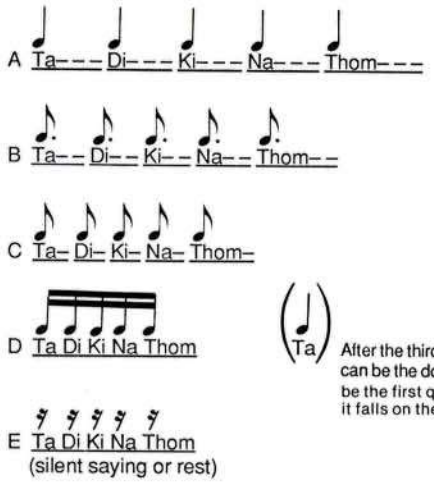
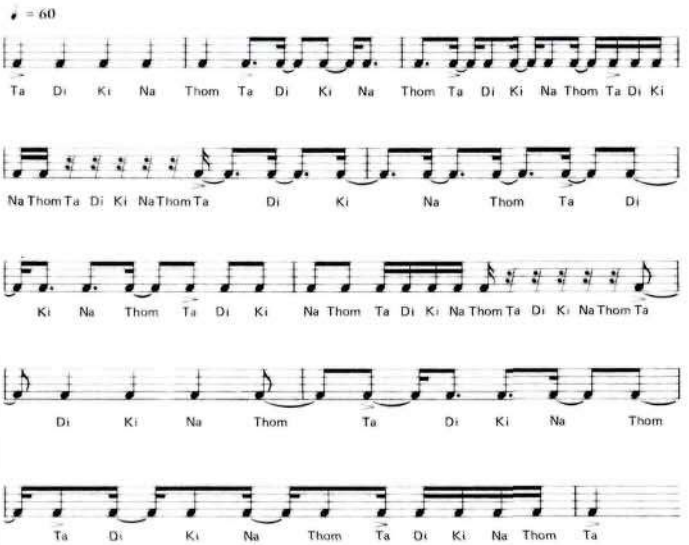

A Ta– – – Di– – – Ki– – – Na– – – Thom– – –
B Ta– – Di– – Ki– – Na– – Thom– –
C Ta– Di– Ki– Na– Thom–
D Ta Di Ki Na Thom
Ta
After the third time through, this quarter note can be the downbeat you end on, or it can be the first quarter note of A. In any event it falls on the beat and on 1 of the Adi Tala.
E Ta Di Ki Na Thom
(silent saying or rest)

This completely Westernized version of Lesson 5 will help to ensure the learning of this lesson. But to me, it's a conceptually less appealing way to visualize the symmetries and reductions.

♩ = 60
Ta Di Ki Na Thom Ta Di Ki Na Thom Ta Di Ki Na Thom Ta Di Ki
Na Thom Ta Di Ki Na Thom Ta Di Ki Na Thom Ta Di
Ki Na Thom Ta Di Ki Na Thom Ta Di Ki Na Thom Ta Di Ki Na Thom Ta
Di Ki Na Thom Ta Di Ki Na Thom
Ta Di Ki Na Thom Ta Di Ki Na Thom Ta

Now go back and try the South Indian system. It should be clearer. One last note: A teacher of South Indian music would never give you Western examples like the one above. Also, in the presence of a teacher or with a cassette aid, no Western examples would be needed.

There are hundreds of different lessons. These are but a few. Hopefully, you'll be able to hear some of these concepts at work when you listen to Indian musicians, and you'll see some of the beauty of the South Indian rhythmic system.

There are two beautiful books that talk about music in a way that is seldom mentioned in school, in music texts, or by teachers. They changed my life drastically. They are *African Rhythm And African Sensibility* by John Miller Chernoff, University of Chicago Press, and *The Mysticism Of Sound: The Power Of The Word: Cosmic Language* by Hazart Inayat Khan, Delta Lithograph Co., Van Nuys, California. There is also a very complete book of South Indian rhythmic theory and analysis of Raghavan's mrdangam lessons. It might appear to be too involved for musicians who don't have a teacher, or those musicians who haven't studied with Raghavan himself or in the South Indian tradition, but it's well done. The book is *Mrdangam Manual,* by John Russell Hartenberger, University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Volumes 1, 2, & 3 #DS-7433024.

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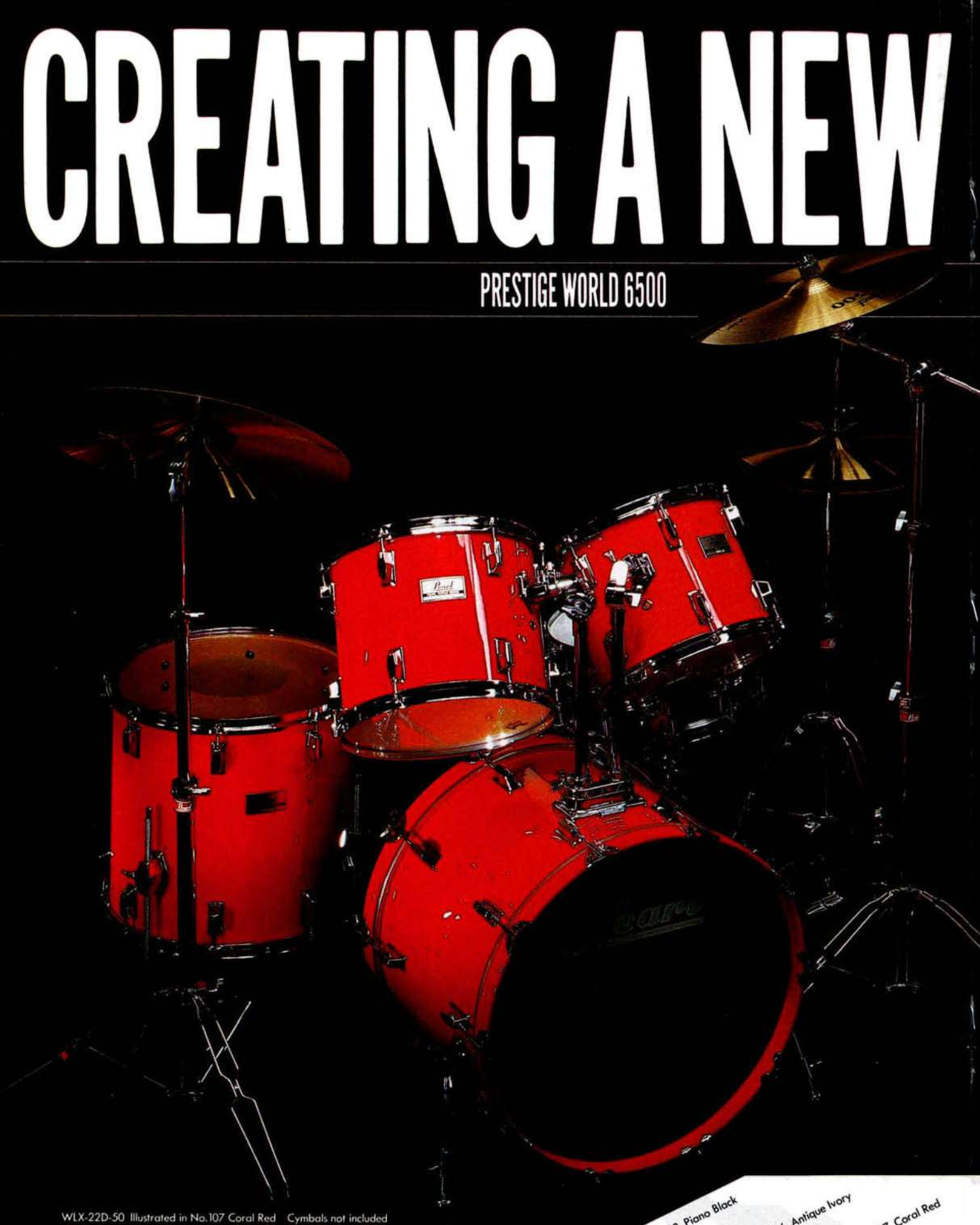

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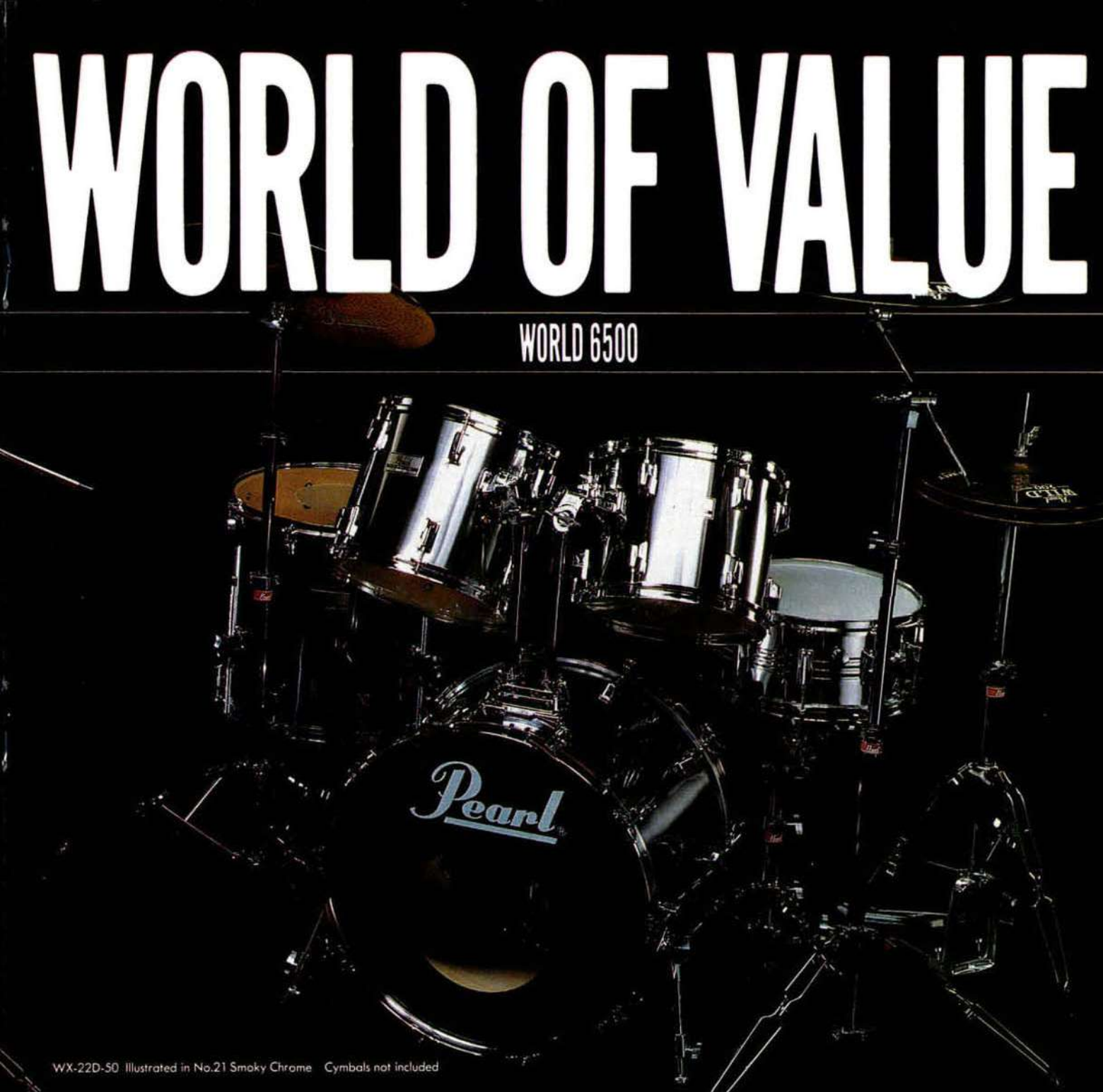

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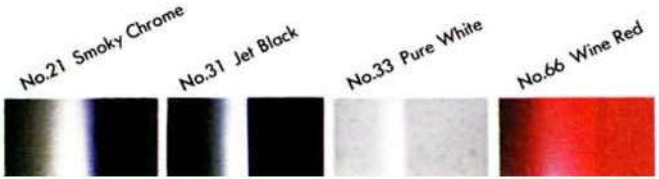

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The Trapparatus

Utopia's Willie Wilcox has been at the forefront of innovative electronic drumkit design almost since electronic drums appeared. When Modern Drummer *first profiled Willie [Dec. '80/Jan. '81 issue], he had just created his radical "Motorcycle" drumkit, which combined elements of musical electronics and theatrical set construction to create a unique audio/visual performance "vehicle." Now, over five years later, Willie has completely redesigned his kit, taking advantage of the incredible advances that electronic drumkit technology has made during that time, and incorporating modern aesthetics, to create what he has dubbed the* Trapparatus. *In this article, Willie explains the reasons behind the new kit, how it was designed, and how it was incorporated into the most recent Utopia tour.*

When I first designed my Motorcycle or "Bike" kit, it seemed like a good visual idea. But at the time, the sound capabilities really weren't there for adequately displaying it. Originally, we had some Paia sounds and some Pearl *Syncussion* sounds, but they just weren't up to the standards that I wanted. So until the technology got to the point where the sounds were useful, I really didn't want to use the Bike. As sampling systems started to come into play, and new companies started to make more electronic percussion, I started to think in terms of bringing the Bike back out.

As to the redesigning of the Bike's appearance, that was partly aesthetic and partly practical. The original kit used pads that were about eight inches in diameter, so everything was very close-playing. The pedals were just pieces of metal and wire fastened together to create a system of our own for use as a bass drum pedal and hi-hat. The hi-hat was very hard to press, and the cable for the bass drum ran to the very front of the kit, where it operated a beater on an inverted chain pedal, almost three feet away from my foot. That too was not the smoothest-operating system. The cymbals were mounted on exhaust pipes into which we had welded cymbal tilters. I had a ride, a crash, the hi-hats, and that was it. There was really no flexibility in terms of positioning.

So I redesigned the Bike into the *Trapparatus because:* (1) I thought the Bike was a little bit too "clunky" looking and I wanted a more aerodynamic look; and (2) I wanted something that was really functional, so that a drummer other than myself could play the kit and say, "Wow—this feels good!" I also wanted a kit that *I* could really play on, without compromising my own playing style. The new design was done by Rick Downey (formerly the drummer with Blue Oyster Cult) and myself. Rick is very mechanically inclined, and he contributed a lot of great ideas. We redesigned the pedal and hi-hat systems, the whole pad system, and the cymbal-mounting system.

Why Exclusively Electronics?

I don't picture this as an electronic kit in the sense that, say, a Simmons kit is. It's really a "sampling system"; I'm playing digitally sampled sounds that are stored in the unit's brain arid triggered by the pads. There is no use whatsoever of any analog, synthesized effects such as white noise or filters. The reason I use it exclusively is that I really think things are getting to the point where it's not *necessary* for me to use acoustic drums.

I used the *Trapparatus* during the last Utopia tour, and when I first started playing it, my immediate reaction was to make comparisons to acoustic drums. Then, after playing and really getting comfortable with it—including soloing every night as well as playing the tunes—I had a chance to *get into* the sampled sounds. I had to adopt a playing style that was a bit different, but I started to discover a way to actually draw the sounds out with the same expression as I could with an acoustic drum. In terms of feel and execution, there were things that were *easier* to execute on the electronic drums—things that didn't require as much fighting of gravity as I encountered when playing acoustic drums. So now I find myself saying that there are certain things that I can't do on the acoustic drums that I can on the electronic-sample drums.

Another tremendous benefit of the electronic drums is the ability to patch directly into the sound system, thereby eliminating all the problems associated with drum miking. Also, we never have to tune the drums. The only exception to that is if a given hall has a certain frequency response that causes the sound of a drum to change in the system, in which case we can adjust that drum at the brain to rectify the problem. But even then, the "tuning" is just done with the turn of a knob, rather than dealing with tuning lugs, microphone placement, drumhead condition that particular night, the stage surface I'm playing on, the way the monitors happen to be mixed that night—all those variables that acoustic drums are subject to. This is especially valuable when I'm on the road, I've just flown in, and I have ten minutes to do a sound check.

The electronic kit also does away with the need for a lot of the outboard sound-processing gear that is now being put on acoustic drums. By having bank selection—the choice of pre-set sounds—you can have total control of drums that are already processed by effects that were done in the studio, and thus don't have to be processed live. I always get really nervous when there's a sound mixer out in the house who plans to gate all the drums, use a reverb, and do the EQing. How many mixers really know what kind of drum sound you're after—especially when it starts to get complicated? In a road situation, the mixer's priority is to make the *band* sound as good as it can sound, and typically there's never enough time to do a good sound check. With the sampler system, I am able to go into a studio and spend the time to get the precise drum sounds that I want. The result is that I have all the exotic sounds I want, and on the tour, we used no outboard gear whatsoever.

Another benefit of the modules for these sample drums—and I think with just about any company's—is that they have an adjustment by which you can vary the length of decay. So if you've got a sampled sound at a length that's too long for a particular room, you can simply turn down the decay. This allows you to record a gated sound without worrying about how its length will be affected by different rooms. The flip side of that coin occurs when you're playing outside in a big festival setting where the wind just blows away every attack that an acoustic drum makes, no matter how well it's miked. With sampled sounds, you have "room sounds" that have been captured, and you can play room-sampled ambient drums in an outside situation.

Why ddrums?

I chose to use ddrums for the *Trapparatus* because theirs were the only samples I

by Willie Wilcox

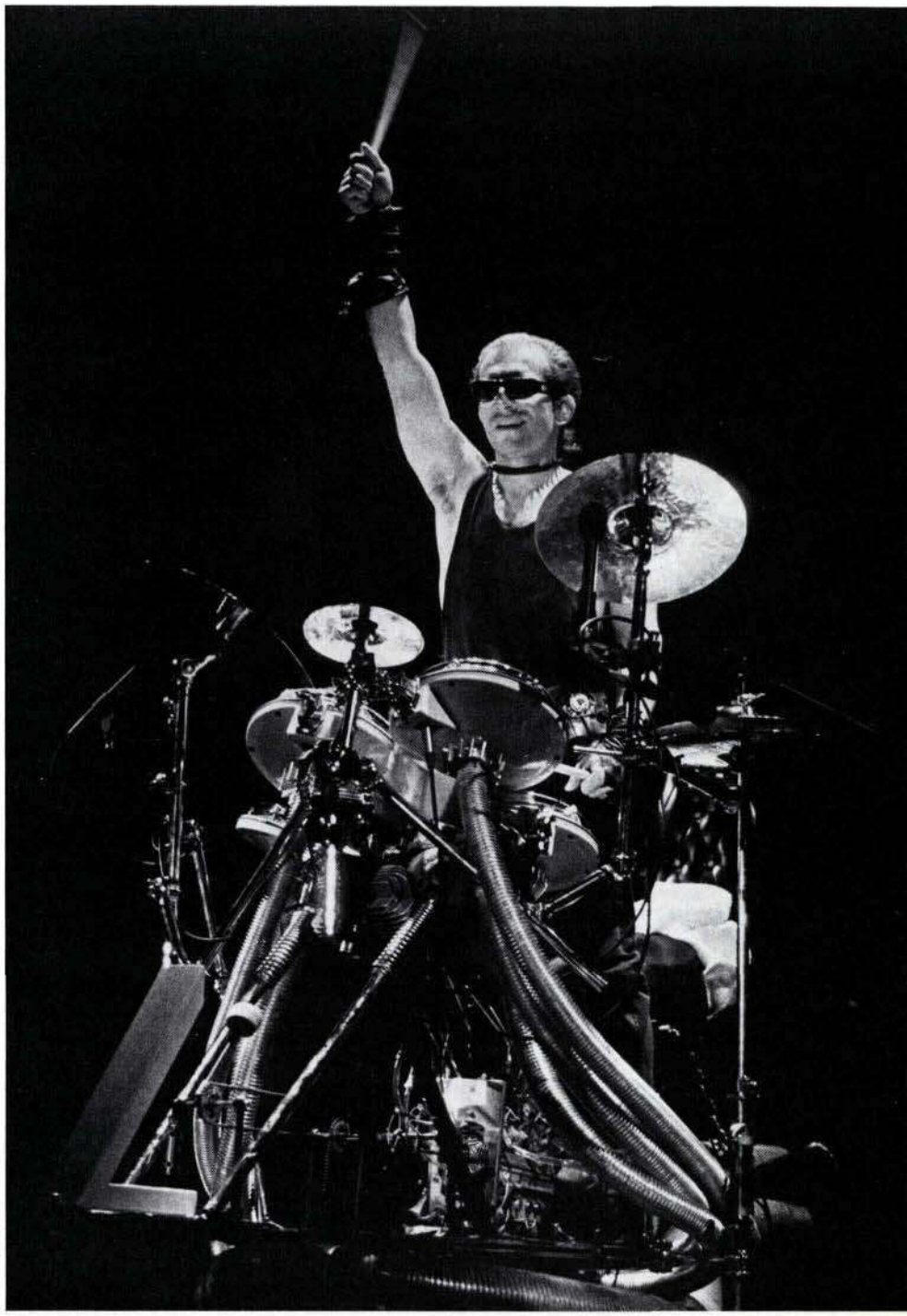

Photo by Jean Lannen

had heard that included the ambient room sounds I wanted. And at the time that I actually designed the kit, theirs were also the only drums that had the amount of sampling time that I felt was necessary—about 1.6 seconds. I'm not sure what their frequency response is, but their quality is comparable to that of the *Emulator II* or the Fairlight. Their pads also have a fairly good playing feel, although there are definite problems with them. The bass drum has a great feel. There is "give" to it, so when the beater strikes, you have the simulation of how a beater feels when it depresses the plastic surface of a drumhead, which you don't normally get when you attack a surface that's like a formica countertop.

Of course, ddrums do have their limitations. For instance, there is no bank-switching to allow the changing of pre-set sounds. We had to build our own system for that.

Cymbals

I'm using real cymbals, and they're Sabians. The reason that I've stayed with real cymbals is because there are so many different qualities and nuances that need to be pulled from a single cymbal that I just preferred to *have* a real cymbal. Of course, you can immediately draw the same analogy for an acoustic drum, saying that there is no way you can get all the sounds out of a sampled snare drum into an electronic drum. But the functions are a bit different, especially in pop music. For instance, when it comes to snare drum sound, you can pretty much go from a low dynamic level to a high dynamic level, end up with a sampled drum sound, and get a fairly good, full backbeat sound that encompasses a fair amount of playability. But the attack sounds and frequency range of a cymbal are very hard to put on a chip accurately, and make it usable. We've all seen that from every manufacturer who's ever tried to do it; there's always something lacking from an "electronic" cymbal.

Another reason for keeping real cymbals was a purely visual one. I thought that the kit itself was very modern and futuristic-looking. At the same time, however, when I saw other drummers playing very modern and futuristic-looking electronic kits, the thing I *disliked* about them was the fact that they lost the visual appeal of seeing a drummer beating on acoustic drums and cymbals. So I thought that, for me, the visual element would still be there if, even though you could see this very wild, futuristic-looking contraption, you could also see these very traditional pieces of metal. That held a strong importance for me in combining the past with the future.

Sound Sources

I've already mentioned that the kit is a digital sampling system, rather than an analog synthesizer. However, I have sampled some synthesized sounds, including some Simmons drums. So I have some analog sounds at my disposal, but they are not being produced in an analog mode by my kit. Having the ability to sample any sound you want digitally really does away with the need for any analog capabilities, unless you want to do further analog enhancing of the digital sounds. But in a performance situation, you don't need any of that. Once you find something that

Reader's Platform continued from page 4

DEALING WITH INSURANCE

I'd like to compliment Charlene Washburn on her article on "Dealing With Insurance," which appeared in the November edition of *MD.* I hope this article will help convince musicians that equipment insurance is a necessity rather than a luxury!

Although Ms. Washburn's suggestions about where to find affordable insurance brought up some interesting points, she failed to mention the excellent insurance offered through the American Federation of Musicians. This plan, available to AFM members throughout the U.S. and Canada, offers 24-hours-a-day coverage, worldwide, whether at home, on the job, or on the road. Furthermore, it covers all risks (fire, theft, physical damage, and theft by forcible entry from locked vehicles) with only a $100.00 deductible for each loss occurrence. Annual rates are $2.40 per every $100.00 of insured equipment, with a minimum yearly premium of $75.00. Discount rates are available for values over $25,000. Most AFM Locals provide information and application forms for this program to their members.

Thanks again for this interesting and valuable article. Keep up the good work!

Ginger Shults
Administrative Assistant
Local 433, AFM
Austin, TX

THE DRUM BUG

Ron Spagnardi's comments in November's *Editor's Overview* really hit home! Terrific and perceptive, Mr. Spagnardi; it's so true. I definitely have "The Drum Bug," and know there's no cure. It's the one disease I hope they'll never find a "cure" for (although my neighbors would disagree). It's so powerful a "bug" that I have to hand-write this letter, since I hocked my typewriter to get extra cash for my Simmons *SDS1* to add to my kit. I've had the "problem" ever since my parents took me to a circus at age 11, and all I was interested in was the sound of the drums and cymbals. From that point on, I became contagious; I've now gotten my wife interested in Ludwig catalogs. While most normal men read *Time* and all the other majors, I read *Modern Drummer* and all the latest drum catalogs. There's always so much to learn in our fast-changing music world, and I have to keep up.

Congratulations, *MD,* for *really* understanding the drummer, and for the funniest editorial I've read in any music magazine. When musical knowledge and good humor meet, you have a winning combination.

Terry Miller
Santa Barbara, CA

works for your show, you're going to keep that and go with it; you don't really have the time to experiment or make changes.

My digitally sampled drums were a set of *SonorLites,* along with an old Ludwig *Super-Sensitive* all-brass snare that I bought from Charlie Donnelly. We miked the drums to our satisfaction, and did all the processing and EQing that we wanted in the studio. I recorded them digitally onto my Sony 707 *ES PCM* tape recorder via an A to D converter (which converted the digital recording to tape). Then, I sent the tape to Sweden for conversion first onto a floppy disk, and then ultimately onto the cartridges that the ddrums use.

The *Trapparatus* On Tour

I didn't use the *Trapparatus* when we recorded our latest album, *POV.* That was done with a combination of electronic drum devices and acoustic drums. But on the tour we recently completed in support of that album, the *Trapparatus* was the featured effect in our stage show. The kit was placed in the middle of the stage, with a very heavy base unit that was placed atop a wooden pyramid. That pyramid covered the motor that spun the entire kit during my solo. The speed for this was controlled by a technician off stage. A question that was asked by a lot of fans was "How can you play when you're spinning? Don't you get dizzy?" The truth is, when I'm soloing, my concentration level is so high that I'm not really aware of what's going on around me. And since the entire kit was spinning, there were no moving parts that were in a "blurring" range; everything was right there in front of me all the time.

As far as setting up went, the *Trapparatus* was very easy to deal with, because it traveled all as one piece. We had a giant road case made for it. Of course, it was very heavy, and it took three or four people to pull the case out of the truck and lift it off the kit. But once it was out of the box, two people could lift the kit—one at either end. Then it would just get placed onto the motor mount. The motor "pyramid" was a separate unit that was plopped on the floor. The *Trapparatus* went into the shaft above the pyramid, and the cymbals were put on the stands. We used Ludwig "bones" for all the cymbal connections. Since those shifted from time to time when the unit was put back into the case, an adjustment was sometimes required at the next setup. But it was less complicated than a big rock 'n' roll setup would have been, and it didn't take nearly as long.

In order to hear the kit on stage, I had two separate systems, one of which was unique. Before the tour, we had molds made of our ear canals, and we had transducers made to those molds, so we actually had in-ear monitors! None of the band had any stage monitoring. I had a small connection box for the monitor cable on the *Trapparatus,* and all I had to do was plug in there to get the mix from the offstage monitor mixer. That box also contained a volume control, so that I could set my own volume level after getting the mix I wanted from the monitor technician. We had a few problems with this system that have to be worked out yet. For instance, the transducers were so small that they couldn't accurately reproduce the 60-cycle-and-below range of frequencies that you get from drums. Consequently, I didn't get that feeling of depth when playing. This also touches on another criticism some people have about electronic drums. There is always an acoustic feedback coming from a *real drum,* and some kind of low-end frequency that your body feels. You don't get that when you play an electronic or sampled drum. Instead, the sound source generally comes from some sort of monitor, which is usually at least a few feet away, giving you an illusion of "second-hand" expression. So I mounted two floor monitors, directly below and on each side of me, and pointed up at me. After I got my mix on stage just through the ear monitors, and had everything sounding right, I'd have the offstage monitor mixer bring up just enough drums in the floor monitors so that they would come into play, and I would get the feel and the bottom from them.

I mentioned earlier that we had to create our own bank-switching system. For this particular tour, we barely got the *Trapparatus* together in time to hit the road. One thing I found out on this tour is that you have to have a sound mixer who is very open to the idea of working with this type of kit, because sound mixers are generally not going to be very happy about you changing drumset sounds on every song. I had three different drumkit sounds for the tour, but I wound up using only two of them: a very gated, ambient, rock 'n' roll drum sound, and a kit with very tight snare and kick sounds and very straight-ahead sounding acoustic toms. I could just hit a button to switch from one to the other, and that worked out very well. For this tour, I didn't incorporate any of the electronic or machine-esque drum sounds that were on the album—partly because I wasn't tremendously happy with all of them, and partly because I wanted some drum sounds that were unique to myself. They were sounds that I enjoyed and wanted to use in a live situation. Had I had the time to get this all together before the album was completed, I would have used the sounds that were on the album. In the future, I'll be able to just pull the samples off the 24-track tapes that the album is cut on, and when I go out on tour, I'll be able to duplicate exactly the sounds I had in the studio, which will be really exciting. Also, the extent of drumkit sound changes will be much, much greater. I'm now working on a system for all of that that I can't go into right now, but basically involves computers doing what they do so well: remembering and changing things.

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Photo by Mark Weiss

Pero continued from page 25

them their money's worth. We're not going to cheat them.

"But," he continues, "I think it's really unfair that people blame bands like Twisted Sister for promoting violence amongst teenagers. What these people don't realize is that kids today are not violent because of our videos or records. If they're violent, it's because of the violence that's out there on the streets—the violence that's a reality. These kids watch TV, which constantly portrays violence—murders, rapes, beatings—or they see it for themselves out in the streets or on the news. So, Twisted Sister comes out with a video like 'We're Not Gonna Take It,' and all of a sudden, we're the ones supposedly getting the youth of America to rebel against their fathers. No way! That video is a rebellion against *one* father—the guy in the video—not every father. I loved my father to the day he died, and I never thought about throwing him out of a window *[as demonstrated in the video]*. That video, just like the one for 'I Wanna Rock,' was meant to be a joke.

"Some of these people involved in those groups like the P.M.R.C. [Parents Music Resource Center] don't have the control amongst themselves or over their own kids, so they blame us. It's unfair because we've worked all our lives to get a certain acclaim for what we do, and people refuse to recognize us because of our image. Kids come up to me at the clinics that I do and tell me that, when they come home with a Twisted Sister record or poster, their parents destroy it, because they think our music is satanic or that we're into drugs, which is totally untrue for this band. At least the kids appreciate us for being genuine musicians, but I can't deal with being knocked down by people who don't really understand us or our music."

Through the drum clinics that he participates in, A.J. has the opportunity to let fans know what he's like outside the parameters of Twisted Sister. "The drums clinics allow me to show a different side of myself," he says. "I walk out on stage just dressed in dungarees and a T-shirt, and everybody's expecting me to come out with raised fists, yelling and cursing. Instead, I just say, 'Hey, how's everybody doing out there?' I tell them what's going on with Twisted Sister, and then I say to them, 'Now I'd like to show you a different side of my playing,' and I sit down and play jazz. Later, I play rock and then I play heavy metal. That way, they can differentiate three separate styles coming from one drummer. I love the band I'm in, but it's important for people to know that what I do with Twisted Sister is just a part of what I am as a drummer and as a person."

It's interesting to note that Pero was the first drummer with Twisted Sister to ever take a drum solo with the band, and it's rather apparent that A.J.'s solos are a facet of his playing on which he spends a lot of forethought and planning. "I've always been big on audience participation during my drum solos," he remarks. "I try to get them involved with what I'm doing, like having them cheer along while I play. But I'm aware that, for a lot of people, when a drummer does a solo, that's often the time they go out in the hall to buy a pretzel and a coke, or to have a cigarette. So by getting people involved—maybe it's playing a riff and pointing to the audience to give a cheer—I find it's the best way to keep them

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interested. It's great when you hear 12,000 people responding to what you're doing during a solo, and that's important to me because I always try to put 100% of my energy into what I'm doing. So it's great to have an equally enthusiastic response from the audience.

"As for what I actually play during my solo, it's basically the same concept all the time. I break my solo down into three parts: First, I start out with something everyone can identify with like structured fills. Then, usually I'll go for some double bass drum patterning. Then, I'll work that into the audience participation section of my solo—starting out slow, working up fast, and then going all out.

"For the '86 tour, I'll probably break it down again, but I might start out with some fast, heavy metal playing, working into a slow, syncopated section with my left foot playing one pattern, my right foot doing something completely different, and with my arms doing something different as well. I'd like to see if the audience would grasp something like that at our shows. I've always tried to play things for the average headbanger as well as the drummers in the audience. Plus I try to put on a show—you know, twirling sticks and that kind of thing—for people who want to see that, too. You just have to try to keep the whole audience happy by having something for everybody."

Planning and preparation are certainly crucial to any performing musician, whether playing live or in the studio. But how does improvisation—surely another very important element of performing—manifest itself in A.J.'s playing? "I'm always doing things spontaneously," he responds. "For instance, if you listen to the *Stay Hungry* album, and then you listen to the live footage on the *Stay Hungry* video, you won't hear the same fill in the same place, unless it's an opening fill or a specific cue fill. I never do anything the same way twice, and it always varies depending on the mood I'm in that night. Improvisation is a mirror of my mood at that moment, and since I'm never in the exact same mood twice, I'll never play a song exactly the same way twice.

"Everything is a learning process," he continues, "especially going into the studio every year. You've got to keep on doing different things, taking chances from the time before, because the day

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you stop doing that is the day people will stop buying your records. I think our audience demands something different from us, and with our next record, *Come Out And Play,* we're trying to meet that challenge.

"With the new record, I went into the studio in a much different frame of mind than I did when we recorded *Stay Hungry* in 1984. The last time I went into the studio, we had gotten an ultimatum from Atlantic Records that if we blew it with that album—*Stay Hungry*—then that would be it for us. We wouldn't be getting another chance. So I had gone into the studio thinking, 'Wow, this is our *last stop.'* The pressure was really on. This year, I know that we've been on the road together a lot, and we have a good feeling about ourselves and what our direction is. This new album can only be better than the last one. So, overall, my approach in the studio is different, and so far, it's been a lot more challenging."

Another reason A.J. is faring better in the studio on the new album, as compared to his experience on *Stay Hungry,* is because, this time around, the band has chosen a producer who's in touch with the needs of a drummer. *"On Stay Hungry,* we were produced by Tom Werman," explains A.J. "He tore me apart in the studio as far as my drumming was concerned. He criticized everything I played, and he actually told me exactly how he wanted everything to sound, with no regard for my playing abilities. I said, 'What the hell am I going to be playing for if he's telling me what I *have* to play? We might as well have hired Mutt Lange, and let him program the *LinnDrum* like he does on Def Leppard albums.' I really feel for drummers who have to put up with producers in those kinds of situations. Finally, Dee said to him, 'Look man, he's our drummer. *He plays.* He knows what has to be done.'

"For this album, we have Dieter Dierks producing *[Scorpions, Accept],* and the situation is totally different. Dieter knows what I'm capable of and he encourages me to play what I want, but at the same time, he makes suggestions on what works, what comes across in the studio, and what doesn't.

"One thing he absolutely insists on is that the drum sound be nothing short of monstrous. That's why we've been working in the studio for the last five days to get a great sound. I've been beating out single notes on each drum to get the right sound. It took three days just to get a bass drum sound and another two days to get the right snare drum sound. But that's not *my* biggest priority. It's the producer's. I'm not much of a fanatic in the studio. I'm definitely not the kind of drummer who says, 'I've got to have the perfect drum sound in the studio or else I'm not playing.' I'm the type who knows that, if the sound is good in the studio, it's going to be tremendous live.

"Like I said, rather than being in the studio trying to get every little sound down flawlessly with the producer saying, 'Can you put a little ting in after the guitar solo? I didn't like what you did there before,' I'd rather put my energies into playing live. I know that, if you leave a mistake on a track, it's going to be there forever, but I also think that, if you, let's say, accidentally hit a stick during a roll and that's left in, you should realize that it's part of the human element. When you come down to it, that's what music is all about.

"But getting back to what kind of drum sound we're shooting for on this album, I'd have to say that I'm definitely playing a lot more than just simple beats. I'm doing a lot more fills, more offbeats—just a lot of things that I wanted to do on *Stay Hungry* but wasn't allowed to. In my opinion, *Stay Hungry* had nothing really intricate on it from a drumming standpoint. It just had a straightforward approach. On *Come Out And Play,* we're using different types of drum sounds throughout the album, and it's being digitally recorded. I'm actually playing a lot more on this one."

Like many other bands, Twisted Sister is a group best appreciated *live.* Since it's unavoidable that the band has to work in the studio in order to make records, do they attempt to duplicate the excitement and big sound of a live performance within the limitations of a studio? "That's pretty difficult," A.J. replies. "Some bands sound great on record, but when you see them live, it can be disappointing. With us, we've always been much better as a live entity versus a recording band. When you hear us on record, it's good, but when you come to see us live you're going to walk out of there dripping with sweat, because we put so much into it that the

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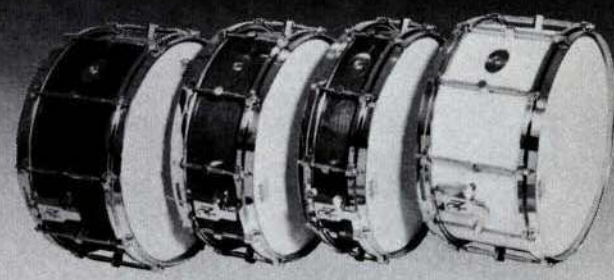

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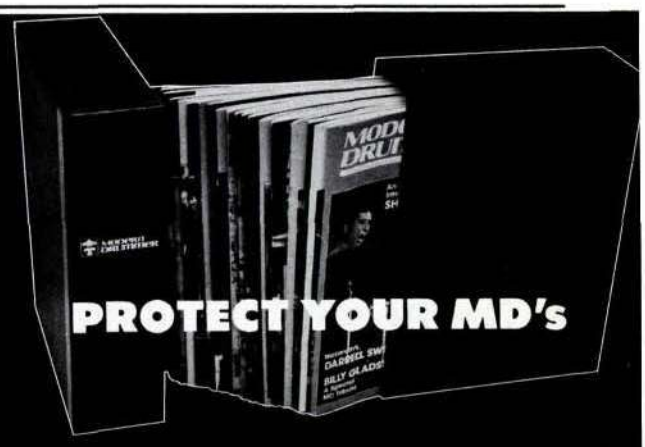

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audience can't help but get caught up in what's going on. We're walking offstage completely drained ourselves.

"The hardest part, of course, is getting that excitement across on vinyl, because soundwise, you just can't duplicate that in the studio. For instance, Mark Mendoza's [bass] amps are so loud that he shakes the whole arena on his own, and you can't reproduce *that* in the studio. Also, because our adrenaline is pumping so high when we're on stage, everything is played at a much faster pace. We are definitely a live band, no doubt about it."

Anyone who has ever attended a Twisted Sister concert is aware that the band relies on both the overwhelming audible and visual components that make a Twisted Sister show unforgettable. Through their stage design, the group has tried to create the atmosphere of a city street, using props such as chain-link fences on stage. Now A.J. has taken that idea one step further by helping to design a drumkit that looks remarkably like garbage cans. "The story behind that goes back to a year ago, when Dee and I were sitting around talking about our stage motif. Dee said, 'Imagine if you could make drums out of garbage cans? They'd probably sound tremendous.' I said, 'That would be pretty wild. You'd definitely get some great overtones.' But instead of actually making drums from garbage cans, I came up with the idea of having drums made to look just like them. Of course Dee liked the idea, because they would fit in perfectly with our stage setup. So I spoke with Bill Ludwig III, who contacted Patrick Foley on the West Coast. He helps to commission artwork on musical instruments. The two designers—Eloy Torrez and Jim Itkin—sent me a rough sketch of how it would look, and when I saw it, I knew it was going to come out great. When the kit was finished, I was really blown away because it looks exactly like I dreamed it would, even down to the cymbal stands, which are made to look like plumbing pipes. They used a mask and spraying process to get an airbrushed look, and when you sit about 50 rows away from the stage, you're almost convinced that they are made from real garbage cans.

"It took me four days to put the whole kit together, because they sent me the shells and the heads, and I had to put everything—all the rims and the lugs—on myself. The *May-EA* mic's are built right into the side of the drums. They're modified Shures, so all you've got to do is plug a wire into the side of the drum—a regular three-prong cannon jack—which plugs right into the board."

The new kit also features four bass drums, which is a pretty unusual setup for a rock drummer. But that's just another example of how A.J. strives to be as unique as possible. In the case of his four bass drums though, he contends that he implements them for the sound they produce, not the visual effect. "Well, the whole concept behind my kit is really to get a sound that's individualized," he explains, "and hitting two 26" and two 24" bass drums at the same time produces a different type of sound. The drums are connected to each other by a special pedal designed by Drum Workshop. It's built so that each foot will hit the 26" drum and the 24" drum at the same time. I tried using that all the time, but the pedal gives a slight flamming effect, so I only use it for my solo. For the main part of the show, I'm only using my 26" drums. Then, right before my solo, my roadie switches on the other two beaters. It's definitely twice the punch as double bass drums.

"Being a rock drummer with four bass drums is a little different. Maybe people will remember me 20 years from now and say, 'There used to be this maniac who played four bass drums on stage . . . .' I'm constantly thinking of new ways to approach drumming. I always write my ideas down, so that when I get some free time one of these days, maybe I'll have the chance to work these things out. Someday I'd like to get into the position where, when I'm off the road, I'll be able to work with a big equipment manufacturing company that has the facilities to do research and design. That dimension of music really interests me.

"As for my actual kit, I have those two 26" bass drums connected to two 24" bass drums on each side. For tom-toms, I've got two 8", a 10", a 12", and two 14" toms on my left. I've also got 15" and 16" mounted toms, plus 16", 18", and 20" floor toms, which are double-headed while the rest of the kit is single-headed. In the middle of my setup, I've got a 12 x 14 snare, which is my main snare, and on the left of that, I've got a 6 1/2" hammered-bronze snare, which is a great-sounding drum—a higher, crisper, jazzier-sounding snare compared to my other one, which has more of a fat-bottomed sound to it. All my acoustic drums are by Ludwig.

"I have five electronic drums. They're called *ddrums* by Guild, and they're great for special effects. I have the pistol shot, explosion, and timpani sound in the cartridges, which you slip in back of the brain. I use Duraline skins on my middle snare and my bass drums because they seem to hold up the best, and I use Ludwig *Rockers* on all my toms because they sound more live to me.

"The cymbals I use are a combination of the new *Platinum* series by Zildjian, the new Z series, and the Zildjian *Impulse series.* I have two sets of hi-hats: a pair of 15" *Impulse and* a pair of 13" Z series. The Z hi-hats are on my left, and are always closed. My main hi-hats are the 15's; I have them mounted on a Drum Workshop Remote Hi-Hat, so that I can play them with my hand on the right, but still control them with my left foot. Then I have an 18" *Platinum,* an 18" Z, and an 18" *Impulse;* a 16" *Platinum,* a 16" Z,

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A.J. was one of the first drummers to try out the new Z cymbals. What does he like about them? "I always wanted a loud cymbal with quick decay," he explains. "The *Impulse* cymbals are loud, but they have enormous sustain. Sometimes I need that live, but it can be a problem in the studio. So now I've got the *Impulse* cymbals for when I want a lot of sustain, the Z cymbals for when I want fast decay, and the *Platinums,* which are right in between. The other thing about the Z cymbals is that they are hammered with four different designs, and each design gives a slightly different sound. That's great for the type of music I'm playing right now, because I need different things at different times."

Although his setup can surely be described as "massive," A.J. recommends that drummers just starting out should start small as far as equipment goes. "I think you should always start out with just the bare essentials, because if you begin with too many drums, you'll just get confused about what to do with them. I started out with four cymbals and five drums, and now, after about 23 years of playing, I have a 22-piece drumkit and 24 cymbals. But I'm not saying that having more equipment makes you a better drummer. That's not my philosophy. I use a big kit because of the options and colors it gives me. There are plenty of great drummers who have small kits, but what makes them so incredible is that they know how to utilize the few drums they have. Leonard Haze [Y & T] only has about six drums on stage, but he's great with those six drums."

It's not by chance that many of Twisted Sister's most outstanding songs, such as the high-speed "Stay Hungry," the ferocious "Burn In Hell," and the upbeat rhythms of "I've Had Enough," are also the tracks that feature some of Pero's most notable drumming. That's partly due to Dee Snider's collaboration with A.J. in constructing the songs on the strength of the drums. "Dee is able to write songs rhythmically, melodically, and lyrically, which is a rarity in music these days," A.J. comments. "He writes the basic rhythms and the melodies first. Then I write my drum parts around the song, depending on what I think that song requires. For instance, a song like 'We're Not Gonna Take It' is played simple and tastefully, but 'Burn In Hell' and 'The Beast' are played more intricately. Those two songs require more technical-type playing. For each song we do, my approach is different. Since we all have the capacity to play a wide range of rock styles, Dee can write a group of songs for a record and none of them will sound the same. Yet, every song will sound like a Twisted Sister song, because we definitely have our own exclusive style.

"It's an advantage for me to have someone like Dee writing our music, because he's sort of a frustrated drummer, so he loves the drums. He knows what he wants, but he usually just makes suggestions to me. He usually gives me a tape of a song and says, 'This is the chord pattern. I want you to write a drumbeat doing this or that.' I go home and listen to it. Then I come back to the studio a week later with all my drum parts down, ready to record. A song like 'I've Had Enough' was a situation where Dee wanted me to dominate the track. That song was built on Bad Company's 'Can't Get Enough Of Your Love,' which is a track where the drums really dominate throughout the entire song."

It's often the little things that make the biggest impression on a track. A.J. frequently adds unexpected touches on songs that make them stand out. A case in point is the drum coda he attaches to "I'll Take You Alive." "That came about when Dee suggested that I take the spotlight at the end of the song. He told me to come up with something that would remind people of a train. I thought about how I would go about doing it, walked into the studio a little while after that, and I did it on the first take. I had an idea of what I was going to play, but it was pretty spontaneous. I started out on that with double bass drums, then I went into a triplet, and then I went all the way around into a single stroke, which I carried into a double bass with a flam type of snare to the end. It was just an opportunity for me to lend my input to our music.

"It's a great feeling to know that you've contributed to a band that's become as successful as Twisted Sister. I feel like I've accomplished something by being a part of this band and that my style of playing has changed the sound of the music. The music has changed from being primarily a guitar-oriented band to a guitar- and drum-oriented band. I want people to realize that not only are there two great guitar players, a very solid bass player, and an excellent singer in Twisted Sister, but there's also a drummer in the band! That's something that I know I've helped to bring out. As far as the band goes, we all have respect for each other, and since the other band members are aware of what I'm capable of, they know I'll come through. They can depend on me. I'll put out my best on every track, and if something goes wrong in the studio, they know I'll be back the next day to take care of it. I won't say, 'I don't need this' and then disappear for five days, which some people might do. Who would I be hurting if I did that? The kids—that's who. So giving 100% of myself to the music means everything to me, because our fans deserve the best that we can give them. The fans—all the kids who come to our shows and buy the records—are the ones behind us, so we do it for them."

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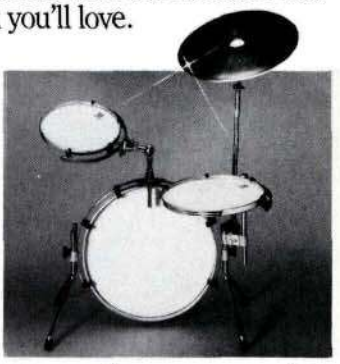

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Two Techniques For The Hi-hat

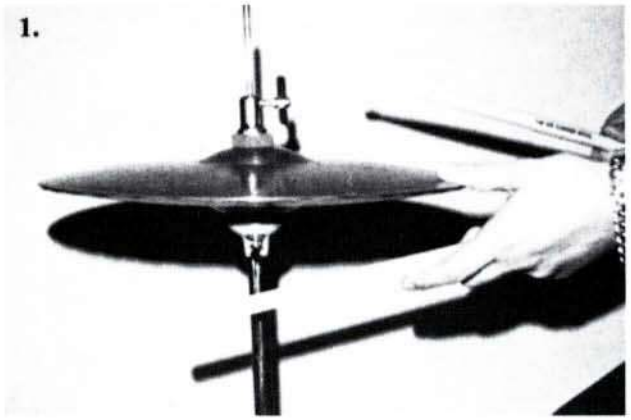
by Joe Buerger

Over the years, I have enjoyed listening to and watching the hi-hat techniques of Roy Burns, Buddy Rich, Max Roach, and Barrett Deems. During some of the clinics that I have performed at, I have received questions on a few of these hi-hat techniques that I've incorporated into my own playing. The two techniques that seemed to have caused the biggest mystery among the audiences were what I call "fanning the hi-hats" and "the over and under." Both of these techniques are used effectively and musically by the gentlemen I have mentioned. Some people may say that these techniques are hi-hat tricks, but when used properly and in the right place, these exercises can be visually, as well as musically, exciting.

Over And Under

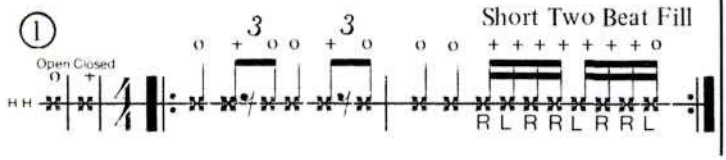
The over and under technique refers to the hand positioning used in playing the hi-hat. The right hand strikes the hi-hat on the top cymbal in the normal playing position. However, the left hand strikes the bottom of the hi-hat, using the butt end of the stick, with the thumb of the left hand resting on the top cymbal.

1.

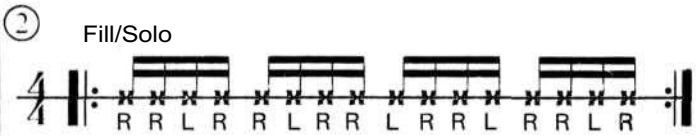


The hi-hat cymbals should not be tightly closed with the foot, but should be positioned where both cymbals are just touching one another.

When playing time, as in the first bar of Example 1, the closing effect (+) is achieved by squeezing the left hand, making the butt end of the left stick strike the bottom of the cymbal at the same time that the tip of the right stick strikes the top cymbal on beats 2 and 4. When you get to the 16th-note fill in Example 1, tighten the cymbals slightly with the foot for a more staccato sound until you reach the last 16th note and the beat of 1. Then return to the semi-closed position for the open sound as before. While playing the fill, the right hand strikes the top cymbal, and the left hand strikes the bottom cymbal in the same motion used to play the 2 and 4 of the first measure.



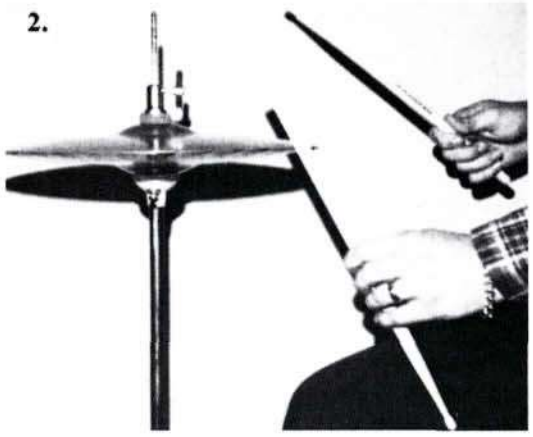
The fill in Example 1 may be played longer than two beats. When using this idea in a solo, the R-R-L pattern may be repeated as long as desired, as in Example 2. The important thing to remember is not to lose count of where you are in the fill; always be able to find the count of 1.



Fanning

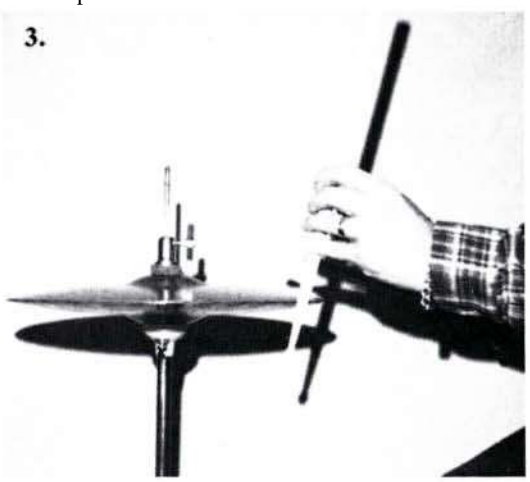
Fanning the hi-hat is a very effective fill and solo concept. Max Roach has been known to amaze drummers and non-drummers alike with this technique. It is a very visually exciting effect. Fanning relates to the over and under technique in that both use the right hand in a normal fashion, with the left hand changing its usual function. In the case of fanning, the left hand plays a down-stroke on the top of the hi-hat with the edge of the stick closest to the butt end, as shown:

2.



The next left is played with the shoulder of the stick closest to the tip, with an upward motion:

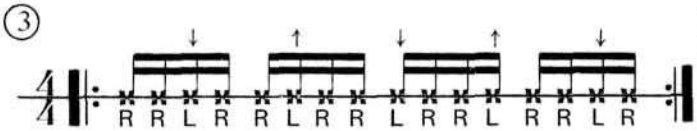
3.



The left hand moves up and down, with the left stick held almost parallel to the hi-hat stand. As the left arm moves up and down, the wrist turns slightly to accommodate hitting the correct end of the stick. This up-and-down movement has the visual effect of "fanning" the hi-hat. Be sure to notice the grip in Photo 3. Caution should be used so as not to run your knuckles into the hi-hat cymbal. Also, the louder you attempt fanning, the bigger the motion and the more impressive the total effect is.

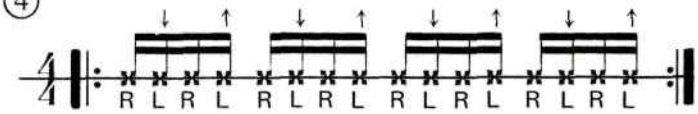
One way to adapt the fanning technique is to use it in conjuction with Example 3. Play each right-hand stroke in the normal fashion, but use the fanning technique for the left strokes. Start the fanning motion by using a downstroke with the left hand (as in Photo 2), and then use the upward motion on the next left (as in Photo 3). Start at a very slow tempo.

③



Another way to apply the fanning technique is by simply alternating rights and lefts, using the fanning technique on all left-hand strokes. In Example 4, the arrows above the left-hand strokes indicate the direction in which the stick should be moving.

④



Great patience should be exercised when you are trying to learn the fanning technique. It is actually easier to play than to explain. The fanning technique took approximately six months for me to master. Hopefully, it won't take you that long now that you know what is involved.

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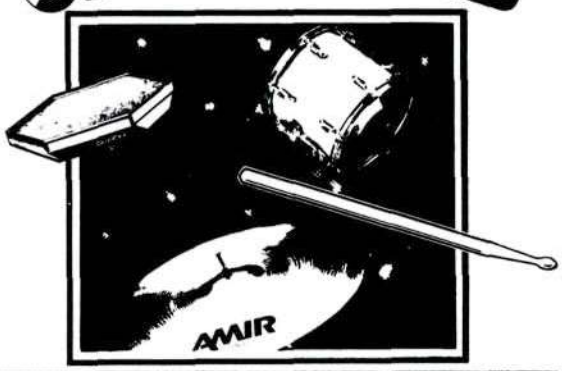

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***Bear** continued from page 27*

up snare drums. They call me "Snare Bear" occasionally, because if we're in the studio six or eight hours a day, I may spend three to four hours tuning drums.

When Chicago goes in the studio, they work a lot of parts out on a drum machine. When it's down, then they want Danny to lay a track with it. On some tunes, they do it differently: They all go in and blow their hearts out. It depends on how technically involved the tune is.

JP: On a typical Chicago album, how long does it take to get the drum sound?

B: We have taken as long as a day to establish it. It really depends on the sound they're looking for. Sometimes the Simmons head is set up in the control room, and the engineer determines the sound he wants the Simmons to make as the snare and Simmons are mixed together.

JP: Danny is a solid-hitter, but he's not a brute-force type of player. This must lessen your repair problems.

B: He doesn't dent the heads much, and I think that, in the two years I've been working for him, he has only broken one snare head. He uses a very "jazzy" stick: a Pro-Mark hickory 5*A*. Most of the drummers I have worked for used "logs" or at least a medium stick. Sometimes Danny plays a whole show with one pair of sticks. About 80% of Danny's snare hits are rimshots. If he does a lot of rimshots, it eats the sticks up. He has really good technique. I think it has a lot to do with his jazz orientation. Not that he's not a rock drummer, but he has a lot of jazz licks.

I use *Lug Locks* on the snare drums, because Danny does so many rimshots. If he did three songs without the *Lug Locks,* the snare would be completely out of tune. He doesn't break many heads, but he still really whacks it. Every time you hit the snare across the rim for a rimshot, particularly if you hit it over the lug, that lug is momentarily loose. When you hit it, the rim is pushed down enough for the screw to work its way loose. So I use *Lug Locks* on the top six lugs closest to the drummer. That's where he hits, and that's where it would lose tuning. We talked about putting them on the toms, but that would be more of a pain. If we're in the middle of a show and Danny doesn't like a particular tom or the tuning slips, I can go up while someone's doing a solo on the other side of the stage and retune the tom with the torque tuner without having to hear it.

JP: It looks like you have a full tour schedule ahead of you for the USA and Puerto Rico.

B: Yes. Last year, we did a little over 100 shows. This year, we're fortunate to be asked to return for encore performances at some places we have just recently played on this tour. I'm happy to work with this group. With Chicago, I'm a salaried employee all year long, not just when I go on the road. I can't say enough about the whole outfit.

***Aquilato** continued from page 28*

it, so I have to carry this little drum box around!

JP: How did you go about recreating the *Big Bam Boom* sound?

AA: The record involved Bob Clearmountain, the best engineer in the world. Every engineer wants to know how Bob gets his drum sound. For live shows, we used the same Yamaha drumkit, Simmons brains, and *LinnDrum* used on the record. The three sounds were combined on the album. The AMS digital-delay system has been a big part of the drum sound in the studio. You can sample with the AMS, and it will hold the sample and run it through its echo. So, via the snare drum, we would trigger the snare drum sound that the AMS held in its sample mode, and then play it through a big, gated reverb. That's just another sound added to the whole. Bob uses a whole library of sounds.

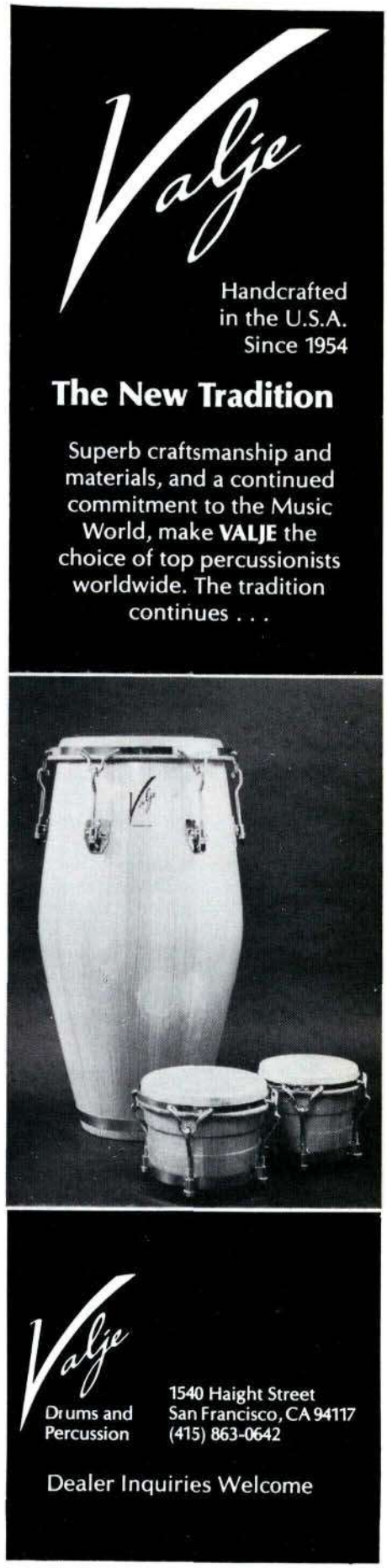
I knew ahead of time exactly what I needed to bring out on the road to get the *Big Bam Boom* sound, because I worked on that album with the band. I designed the rack that I have for that purpose. The *LinnDrum* is 22" wide, which is too wide for the standard 19" rack, so I had to put a special frame in to mount it in the upper half of the rack. The rest of the units are below on the 19" rack, except for the *Dr. Click,* which is not a rack unit. I had ears made for it to adapt it to rack-mounting. I think I gave the *Dr. Click* company the idea, because now they're making a rack-mounted unit. There's also a custom-built junction patch bay and a headphone amplifier in the rack, so that I can listen back to my programs. When I do a show, I just have to run the snakes out, and that's it. Everything else is totally wired all the time. I don't have to waste hours wiring all this gear together.

I program my own Simmons sounds. Mickey leaves that part of the business up to me. We started doing "One On One" again in the show. In the studio, a Roland *TR-808* was used to record that. Live, we used the Simmons, because we wanted the "playability" of it. They didn't want to lock it into the machine, because it's like a ballad and they wanted it to be a little more airy. We used the *SDS5,* and the drum part is a melodic tom part tuned to pitch. So, I used to sit there every day and tune the modules to pitch with a strobe tuner, so that Mickey wouldn't be out of tune with the band. The pitch settings can drift a little if you don't adjust them.

JP: With the abuse your equipment takes from globe-hopping, how do you manage maintenance?

AA: Joe Cusatis, who owns the Modern Drum Shop here in New York, takes care of our needs and repairs. He makes Mickey a custom drumstick. It's a 5*B* shaft with a *5A* bead on it—*The Mickey Curry* model.

JP: Are those sticks available to the public?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AA: Yes, but they're not stamped as the *Mickey Curry* model. Joe is fabulous. He does great repairs, and he deals with professionals on a pro basis.

JP: Do you think the role of the roadie has changed greatly over the years?

AA: If a roadie wants his role to change, it will change. I know some roadies who still can't relate to anything besides setting up and breaking down. *I* like to take a very technical view, because we're in the modern age.

Covelli continued from page 29

to the manufacturer for a technical manual. Then you spend an hour with the tech. I set up a tape recorder and ask him questions.

JP: So off-hours homework is an important part of the technician's job?

DC: Definitely.

JP: What is your role during pre-tour production?

DC: I'm there on the ground floor as the band is learning the tunes. As they're adding timbale sounds or whatever, I'm there to make suggestions. After the band learns the tunes, we go into full-production rehearsals with lighting and sound on a big sound stage. Hopefully, I will have enough time in a place like that to choreograph the show. I'll go through the set and become aware of the equipment changes so that I won't look like an idiot running around the stage.

JP: After preproduction, what's your next step?

DC: We usually book some obscure dates in smaller towns, do a few gigs, and get it together before we play the big markets. We take it on the road, usually with a domestic tour of about two and a half to three months. The last couple of years, every tour has included Japan. If you're big enough, you'll go to Europe—and maybe even make some money.

JP: Many tours gain their best overseas profits in Japan. I understand that the working relationship there is exceptional.

DC: When you're touring in Japan and dealing with the house crews, you can't even buy yourself a pack of gum. They treat you like a king. You don't have to lift a finger. You set up your stuff one time. They mark it all in Japanese as far as stage right and stage left are concerned. They take pictures of it all. The next day, you walk in and the equipment's already up. They go out of their way to help you get exactly what you need for the show.

JP: Once on the road, what are the typical tech problems that pop up? For instance, you said that the tour begins with dates in small towns. What do you do when a high-tech piece of equipment breaks down in an out-of-the-way place?

DC: That's why my relationship with all the equipment companies is important. Tris endorses the best: Pearl, Simmons, Remo, and Pro-Mark. I can call Pearl or Simmons and say, "Hey, this took a dump. I need something out here right now." They will do their best to stand behind their products. If the company doesn't service their endorsees, people will hear about it, and it won't be good for the company.

I also have to second-guess what's going to happen on stage. Carrying spares is the way to go. It's also important to have alternate plans. For instance, Tris and I have discussed what to do if he breaks a snare drum head during a song. I felt that I shouldn't go up to the stage during the song, mess up his timing, and look unprofessional. We decided that, if the head breaks, I will turn the snare module on the Simmons up—because we have a Simmons sound triggered from a *May EA* mic' built into the snare drum—and Tris can hit the rim and trigger the Simmons module to get through the rest of the song. After the song, he can back off and I will change to another snare that is standing by.

JP: The touring technician's life-style is certainly not that of the typical nine-to-fiver. What are the advantages of taking your tech skills on the road?

DC: The advantages are that you do a lot of traveling, meet a lot of interesting people, and get a lot of enjoyment out of the musicians' company and music, which is a big attraction for me. The money is good also, but you only make that four to six months out of the year.

JP: Outside of technical knowledge, what special personal quality does a techie need to survive the road life?

DC: Patience. [laughs] You have to have a lot of patience, and you have to be very understanding because you're traveling in a bus—a 40-foot box with up to a dozen people. Existing on the road demands working hand-in-hand with everybody. If somebody is behind in work, you can't give that person a hard time because you have to interact with each other to the point where things will be ready by sound-check and, consequently, by show time. The best thing you can have in addition to patience is a full understanding of the *whole* production from the rigging to the trucking, sound, band gear—everything.

JP: What kind of hours are you expected to commit? Do you sign in blood once a tour begins?

DC: You don't sign in blood, but you do develop a reputation by being there all the time. When you get called, it is usually because somebody heard that you do a good job and, basically, you struggle to keep that reputation going for yourself. I could take a day off today and say, "To hell with it, I'm not going to get this *SDS7* fixed today." But that's not the way I operate. If I did, I don't think I would be in the position I'm in now to work on major tours.

JP: Do you often work on scrambled hours?

DC: Yes. When I come back from Japan, I go to sleep at about 8:00 at night and wake up around 4:00 A.M. for about a month. Right now, my schedule is fairly consistent. I usually expect that by noon my truck will be ready to be unloaded, and as soon as I get my equipment, it's time for me to start changing heads and maintaining all of it.

JP: In the '60s and early '70s, "roadie" had a wild-man connotation. They were seen as the bottom of the touring iceberg, but today they are crack team members in the whole production.

DC: Exactly. The roadie used to be a person who just did all the equipment, plugged in a couple of amplifiers, and if anything happened, would drink a six-pack of beer, smoke a joint, and say, "To hell with it!" Now, roadies are *technicians.* I was out on the road during that earlier time.

JP: What was the one major factor that changed all of that?

DC: The technology has come a long way. As I said before, in order to keep your status as one of the best, you have to keep up with things, and as the technology becomes more complicated, the techni-

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cian's life becomes more complicated. You no longer just have to know how to set up drums and tune them.

JP: During that earlier period, there was a different financial situation for backing bands. Everyone has heard stories of the bands and roadies tearing up hotel rooms and being reimbursed with a wink. Today, with a tighter financial situation in the record industry and a more conservative social climate, these stories are rare.

DC: Now, if you check out of a hotel and don't pay your incidentals—room service, phone calls, and so forth—they slap your wrist. You're *expected* to conduct yourself a lot differently than before. Before, you were expected to be sloppy and drunk all the time. That was the roadie.

JP: Then the cliche is true?

DC: Yes. We *could* kill ourselves, party all night long, and not be 100% the next day. Some people choose to do that. I'm just not one of those people.

JP: And you're not 20 years old anymore.

DC: That's right. I can't afford the recovery time. [laughs] I'm 33, and I've been going on the road for 14 years. I've seen what works for me, and that is to get some sleep. Another major difference in the earlier days was that you didn't have the rapport with the artists that you have today. Back then, the artists came for the soundchecks, and there was little interaction with them. Now, there is so much interaction between the artists and the technicians that it is imperative that you're sharp.

I'm also trying to teach myself to play drums, so it's on-the-job training and interesting for me. Not being sharp would be like going to school and not paying attention. So, I do want to be 100% when I'm on the stage, because it's a very demanding position that I'm in.

JP: A good tech can make around $1,200 to $1,400 per week with $210 per week for expenses. The early roadie could never have demanded pay that high.

DC: The technicians who have been around over the years have earned a lot of respect. Before, the old roadies who liked to get high and chase women were somebody's buddy, and that's how they got the job. Now, there are a lot of people who would like to get their friends in a position as a band technician, but it doesn't always work out that easily anymore because there's a lot to say for road *experience.*

If a musician is about to have trouble on stage, someone with less experience would probably have to wait until the trouble happens in order to do something about it. But the experience gives you a sixth sense that something is wrong. If you look at the mixing console, for instance, and see that things are clipping, you may catch the trouble before it becomes a problem.

Another consideration for better pay is that you often get more money if you do two jobs. Even if my pay demands were ridiculous, it would work out on paper to be less than two people with per diem and travel expenses. So it's better for a technician to become knowledgeable in two areas.

JP: Is the old roadie extinct? What becomes of those who refuse to adapt?

DC: Refuse to adapt? [laughs] They're not around. All of my associates from ten years ago that I still know are very conscientious about the latest technology. There's a lot more work and education involved now, and it is mostly self-taught.

JP: How long are you out with the Loggins tour at one stretch?

DC: One month, and then we're back for seven to ten days. Kenny does that because he has a family that he likes to spend time with.

JP: Is that more reasonable compared to your other road schedules?

DC: Very reasonable. When I was with the Doobie Brothers, we did six shows a week, took one night off for Monday Night Football, and did that for two or three months at a time. But I liked it at the time. I was younger and I liked the band. You become especially involved in a project if you like the music. I grew up with the Doobie Brothers and love their music, so for me to work as a drum technician with them was great.

JP: How involved are you with Tris in the teamwork decisions regarding what you both want from the drums?

DC: Very involved. When Tris got the new drums from Pearl, I set them up at my house. Tris came over a couple of times, and we looked at them, listened to them, checked the shells, and so forth. Drums are drums; equipment is equipment. But that time is special to me, because I get to know the man I'm working for and how he operates. Tris is not as meticulous as some others. For instance, Mike Baird is very meticulous. His snare drum has to be tuned at F or a little sharper, so that when it stretches it will be at F. And he's meticulous about whether his cymbals are a few degrees off from the night before. Tris deals with adversity a little better. [laughs] He's a very exciting drummer to be around, and he leaves the mechanics up to me, which is what I like. Whether the drummer is meticulous or not, I am. All they have to do is play. That's what makes a good technician.

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Phil Collins

Q. For readers who'd like to listen to albums that most represent your drumming, which ones would you recommend?

Album	Artist	Label	Catalog #
No Jacket Required	Phil Collins	Atlantic	81240
Another Green World	Brian Eno	Island	U.K. release only
Face Value	Phil Collins	Atlantic	16029
Moroccan Roll	Brand X	Charisma/Sire	PP 9822
Product	Brand X	Charisma/Sire	PB 9840
Genesis	Genesis	Atlantic	80116
Chinese Wall	Philip Bailey	CBS	39542
Principle Of Moments	Robert Plant	Atlantic	90101
Exposure	Robert Fripp	Island	U.K. release only
Peter Gabriel III	Peter Gabriel	Geffen	GHSP 2035
Hello I Must Be Going	Phil Collins	Atlantic	80035

The Island albums released only in the U.K. may be available in the U.S. through import distributors.

Photo by Michael S. Jachles

Q. Which records do you listen to most for inspiration ?

Album	Artist	Drummer	Label	Catalog #
Revolver	Beatles	Ringo Starr	Capitol	SW-02576
The Inner Mounting Flame	Mahavishnu Orchestra	Billy Cobham	Columbia	PC 31067
Believe It	Lifetime	Tony Williams	Columbia	PC 33836
I Am	Earth, Wind & Fire	Freddie White	Columbia	PC 35730
Mad Dogs & Englishmen	Joe Cocker	Jim Gordon and Jim Keltner	A&M	6002

Art Blakey

Q. For readers who'd like to listen to albums that most represent your drumming, which ones would you recommend?

Album	Artist	Label	Catalog #
New York Scene	Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers	Concord Jazz	CJ 256
Keystone 3	Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers	Concord Jazz	CJ 196
In This Korner	Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers	Concord Jazz	CJ 68
Live At Sweet Basil	Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers	King Records	(Japanese import)

The most complete catalog of recordings by the Jazz Messengers would be on Japanese labels. King Records has recently signed an agreement with Concord, so many of those recordings may soon be distributed in the U.S. by Concord Jazz.

Photo by Alison Perry

Q. Which records do you listen to most for inspiration ?

I'm on the road almost 365 days a year, so I don't really listen to anybody's records, including my own. But when I get the chance to hear anybody else play, I always listen—to everybody!

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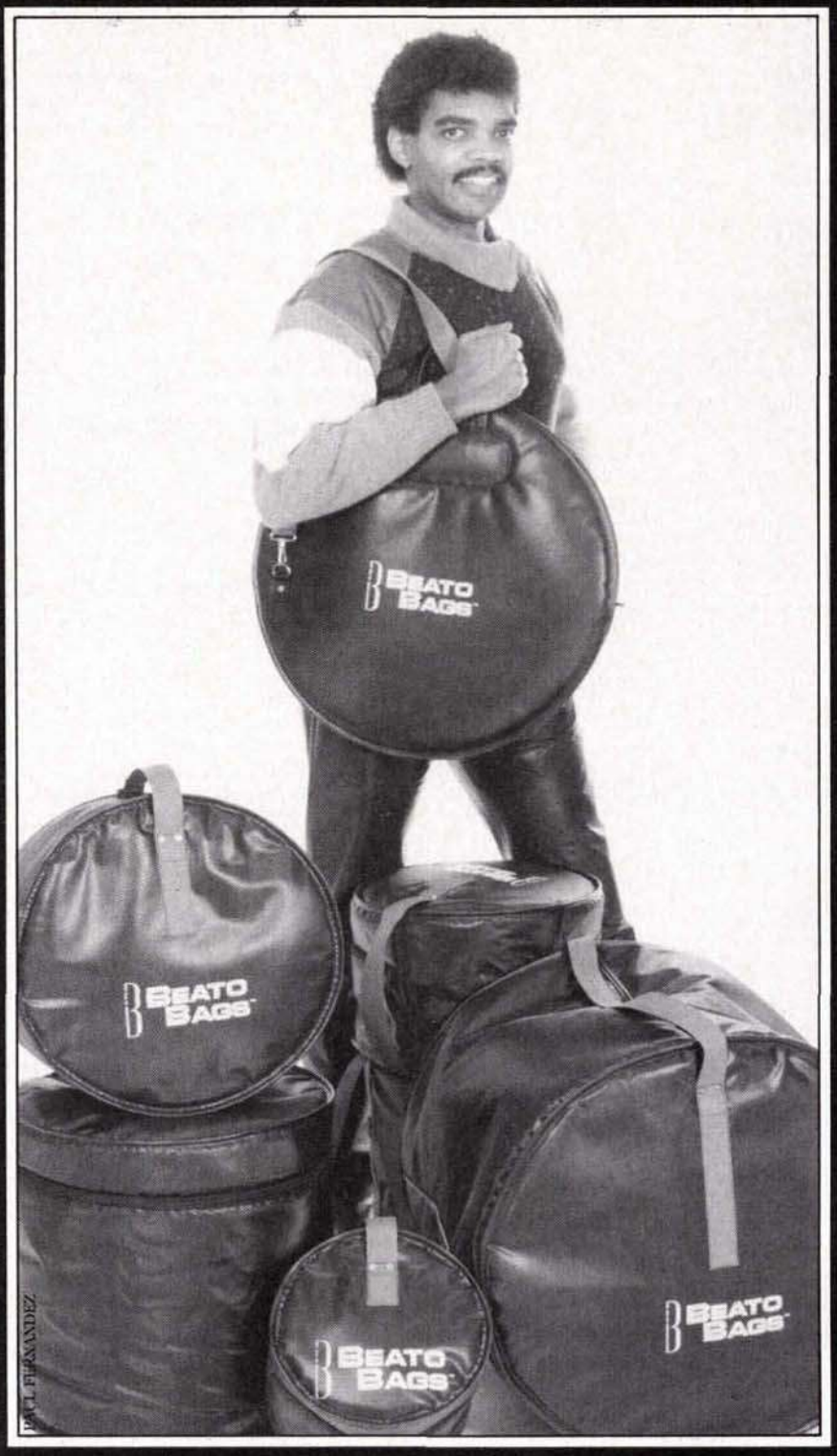

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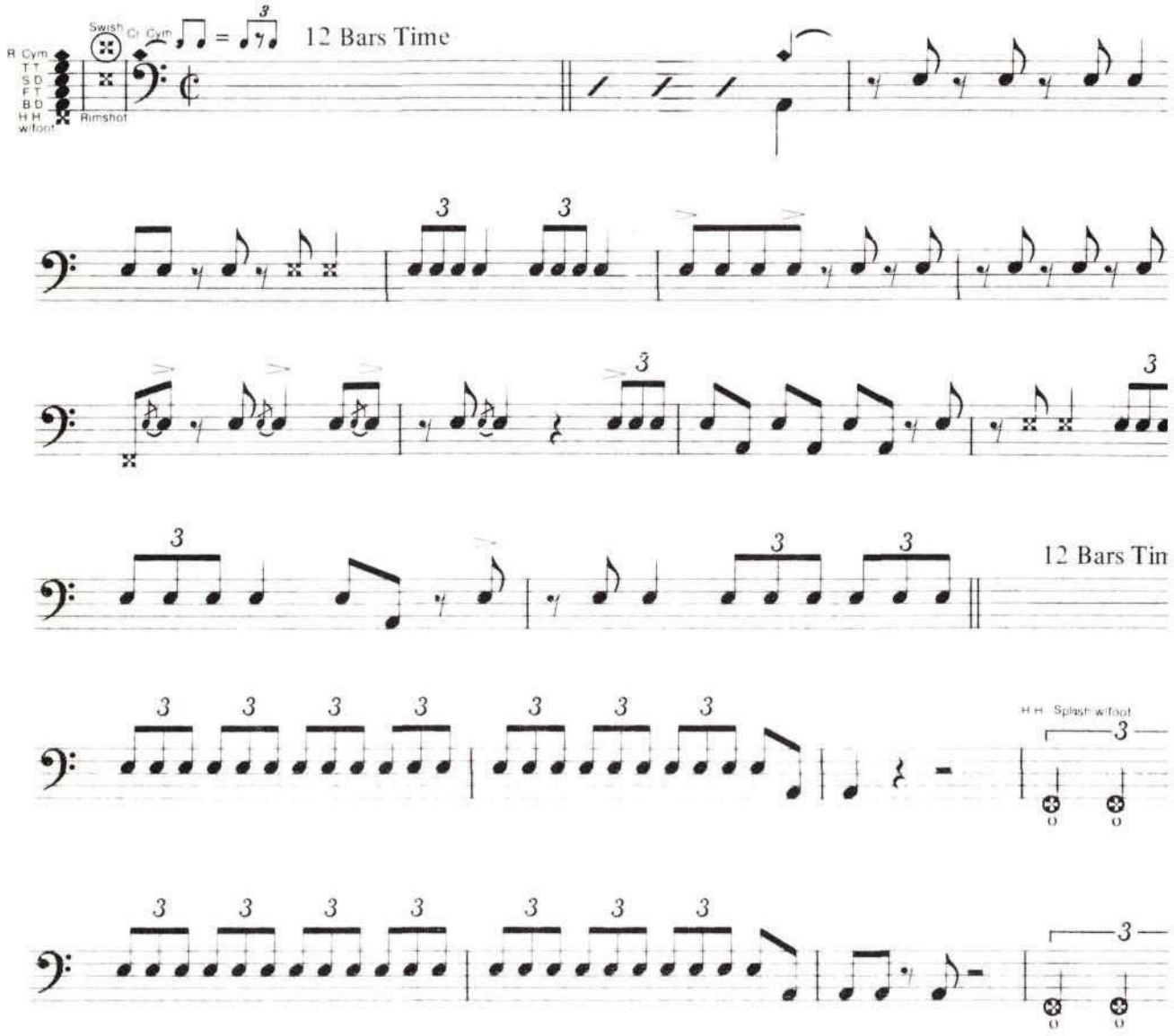
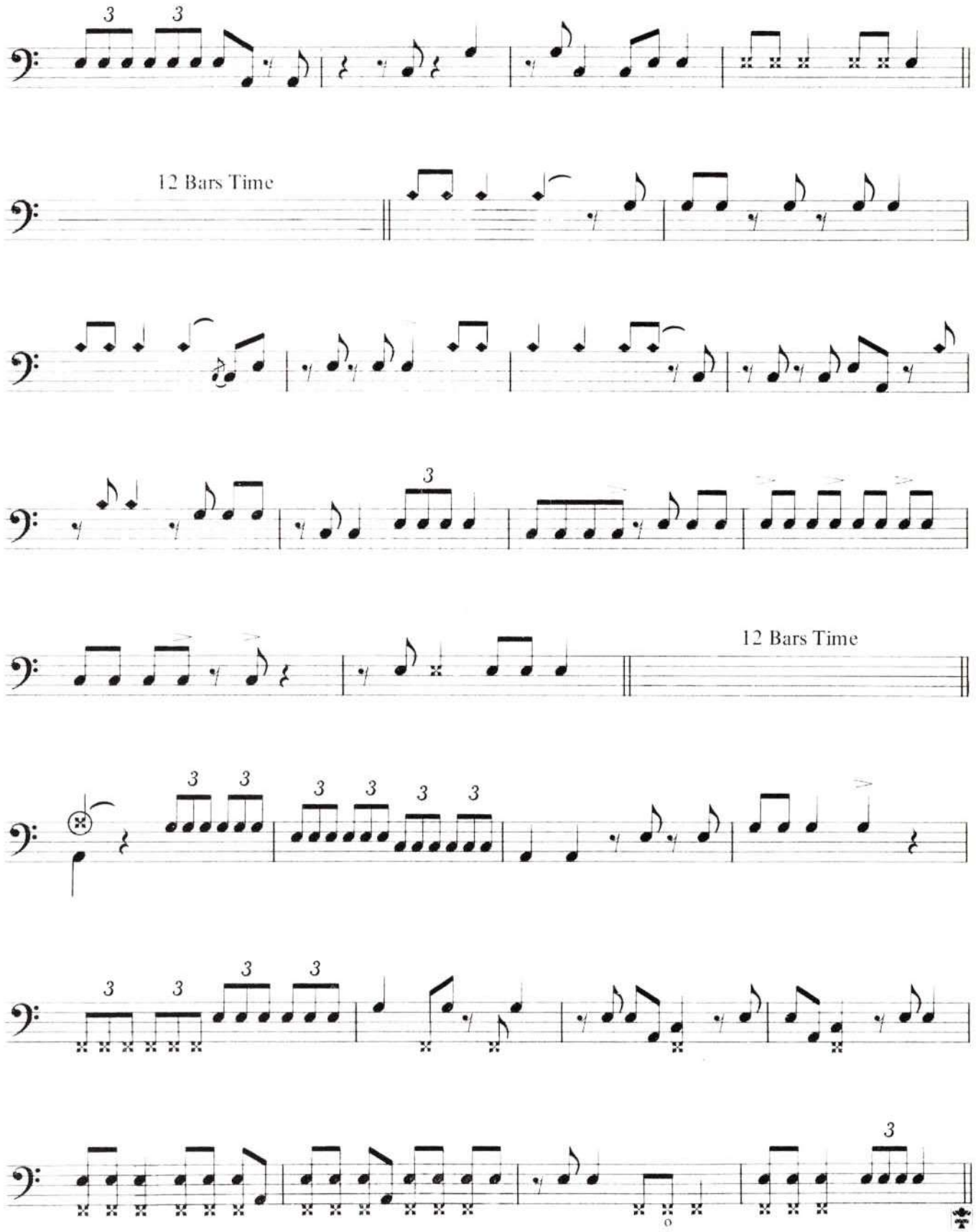
Transcribed by Ted Moore

Photo by Bob Shamis

Roy Haynes: "Matrix"

This month's *Drum Soloist* features Roy Haynes with Chick Corea on Chick's album, *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs* (Pacific Jazz, LN-10057). The excerpt that follows is taken from the tune "Matrix," which shows Roy trading choruses (12-bar sections) with the other soloist. Roy's use of phrasing within the 12 bars is interesting and effective. Only a small portion of Haynes' expertise can be revealed in print.

12 Bars Time
12 Bars Time

by Rick Van Horn

New Edition's Danny Donnelly

New Edition is one of the hottest acts in show business today, taking the R&B market by storm and making some crossover inroads onto the pop charts. This high-energy group, composed of five young men from Boston and inescapably reminiscent of the early Jackson 5, is currently touring sold-out arenas across the world. Providing the drive for the music behind the singing and dancing is Danny Donnelly, a young drummer who already has some solid experience behind him, and is now making the most of this new opportunity. Modern Drummer *had the chance to speak with Danny following a recent performance in New York City.*

RVH: When did you actually begin touring with New Edition?

DD: January of '85. This tour will extend through December of '85. Then, we'll take a short break, after which we'll do Europe and Japan.

RVH: You're based in L.A. How did you get the gig with a group based—in fact created—in Boston?

DD: Well, it was through word of mouth. Interestingly enough, I went to Berklee College of Music and lived in Boston at the time New Edition started to become popular. But our paths never crossed. After finishing up at Berklee, I moved back to L.A., and I free-lanced for three years. In December of '84, New Edition went out there to prepare for this tour. They were looking for a drummer, and I was recommended to them because of some other things I had done, such as touring with Philip Bailey, Rockwell, and a lot of different L.A. R&B acts. So their management gave me a call. I came down and played for them, and there was a mutual affinity. Now I'm a permanent member of the band.

RVH: With a background that includes Berklee, what got you into the heavy R&B style?

DD: I was raised on a lot of different styles of music. In my family, everybody listened to something different. My mother listened to Frank Sinatra and Spanish music, my sister was a rock 'n' roller, and my brothers were all into R&B. I lived in L.A. in a mainly black area, and I heard R&B all my life. Even before I played drums, I knew the whole Motown sound and the other R&B music. When I started to play, I had the R&B feel, even though I did a lot of jazz, fusion, and Latin things, both at Berklee and in L.A. But to be successful and make a living, you *have* to have some sort of good pop feel. I like pop, and I like R&B, so combining elements of both was my way of maintaining a level of working in the business. I still play everything that I can; if I'm in town for a few days and somebody calls me for a jazz gig or a fusion gig or a Latin gig, I'm there. I'll play 24 hours a day. I'm never too tired to take on another gig. But R&B is really where I'm putting my roots in the business. I'm planning on branching out, but a step at a time.

RVH: This current gig with New Edition seems like quite a good "step."

DD: Oh yeah. The group is getting extremely popular; it's like being part of the Jackson 5 when they were at their peak. It's really nice to be a part of a growing thing in the '80s. There really are no other teenage groups around, with the possible exception of Menudo. And most of Menudo's appeal is on the two coasts, while New Edition is popular across the country. Besides, all of Menudo's stuff is done to tracks; they don't use live musicians the way New Edition does.

RVH: The first two New Edition albums were cut almost entirely with drum machines. When you are doing those tunes live, do you try to copy the original drum machine parts?

DD: Partially. With a live show, the act has a lot of choreography, and they want the strong, straight grooves from the record. But they also want accents and little hi-hat things on all their moves. So what I try to do is play part of the record, part of the choreography, and part of me. I'll change up the beats a little bit and put some of my personality into it. They're pretty free about letting me do what I want, as long as it's in the groove and I catch the accents.

RVH: I was surprised to see a set of acoustic drums on stage for the show, considering how electronic the original tracks were.

DD: Yeah—that's funny, because I don't use anything electronic at all when playing live. The percussionist is using a little bit of Simmons here and there, but I don't use any triggering or anything.

RVH: You have an incredibly fast bass drum foot. You're able to duplicate some of the contemporary patterns—created by machine—that feature a straight 2 and 4 backbeat with fast 16th notes on the bass drum. How did you develop that?

DD: Well, the *desire* to do that came from the fact that most drummers felt that those "machine-made" bass drum patterns were impossible to play. I've always told myself that, the first time you say you can't do something, you *won't* be able to do it. I always thought it was possible. I was pretty lucky in that I do have a fairly fast foot naturally, but then I worked on it *a lot.* I would work with a *LinnDrum* machine, programming a lot of those weird "street beats." And then I'd try to play them "live." I'd start them off at a slow tempo and try to pick apart the groove that I had made up—which would be real funky and complicated. I had practiced out of books for years, and I finally wanted to practice something based on my own concept. I decided to be the first drummer who could play like a drum machine but with feeling. I worked on the bass drum stuff all the time. I must admit that tonight the bass drum was a little slower than usual, because I had a technical problem. I use *Hard Rock* bass drum pads by Peterson

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by Larry Rhodes

Dave Huff: White Heart And Beyond

Dave Huff had to feel proud during the 1984 Grammy Awards show. He was the drummer in a Christian rock group called White Heart that was nominated for an award. Never mind the fact that the group didn't win, *or that the self-titled debut album for which it was nominated only sold 60,000 copies. (The fact is, White Heart considers that a pretty high sales figure by a debut group in Christian music.) Who'd have thought that an unknown group could have gotten even a Grammy* nomination, *much less an award? The band had never even toured as a group until the release of the album. In essence, the nomination alone (in the category of Best Vocal Performance by a New Vocal Duo or Group in Gospel Music) had brought the band much of what it had wanted from the outset—respect—and not just from the Christian radio market (in which two cuts from* White Heart *had reached numbers two and three on the chart), but respect from the* entire *music industry.*

Huff was attending college in Los Angeles when the White Heart *album was recorded, commuting back and forth to Nashville for the sessions. The project had started out as a late-night demo tape by a group of Nashville studio players. Individually, they had toured and/or recorded with the cream of Christian music artists before recording that first album. But most of the members had also done a lot of secular studio work and, in doing so, had discovered that Christian rock was usually inferior to secular rock in production and technical quality. They wanted to raise the standard for their music, and perhaps set a new one.*

On White Heart, *contemporary R&B rhythms and melodies plus heavy metal guitar lines were evidence that the group had absorbed the music of Toto, Foreigner, and Lee Ritenour with almost religious zeal. The follow-up album,* Vital Signs, *was even more contemporary, with Huff contributing greatly to the production through his experimentation with acoustic and electronic equipment.*

Then, lead guitarist Dan Huff (Dave's brother) left the group to pursue a career as an L.A. studio musician. Dave stayed with White Heart long enough to finish a third album, but left shortly before the album's release to pursue his own studio career. Dave was interviewed by Modern Drummer *about three weeks after leaving White Heart. He talked about his career with White Heart, his experience as a Nashville studio player, and his hopes and dreams for the future.*

LR: How would you evaluate the part of your career you spent with White Heart?

DH: I feel great about it. The group is definitely setting trends, especially on the third album. The first album was experimental. It turned out to be accepted real well. The second one was different, I think, from what any critic would have expected.

The strong point of the group was that everybody had a different career besides White Heart—like doing jingles or writing for publishing companies. So whenever we came together, we all brought input from our other work.

LR: What are your plans now that you've left White Heart?

DH: I'm going to be doing a tour with Michael W. Smith and Kathy Troccoli. Michael used to write songs and play keyboards for Amy Grant. I did some demo work in Nashville recently with Alan Gorrie, the bass player formerly with the Average White Band. We hit it off just great. Alan just did a solo album that my brother played on, so I'm hoping to get to tour with him.

LR: Is he doing Christian music now?

DH: No, it's secular.

LR: How do you feel about working with a secular artist when your reputation is primarily in Christian music?

DH: My Christian beliefs always come first, but I just want to be the best musician I can be. I have no problems working in the secular world. If I *did,* then I wouldn't be fulfilling my own Christian duty.

LR: Do you ever feel that being known for your beliefs might keep some players from wanting to work with you, because they're afraid you might preach to them?

DH: My brother and I were raised to believe that you don't go out and try to preach something down someone's throat. We believe in actions before words. That's what people tend to look at. There's an awful lot of hype out there anyway.

LR: Your dad, Ronn Huff, is a very successful composer and arranger in the Christian music field. Tell me a little about his career.

DH: Dad was a church music director for a long time. When I was in the third grade, he moved to Nashville and started to write. He had offers to move to Los Angeles and do secular work for Dionne Warwick, and to do orchestrating for albums and TV, but he didn't want to raise a family in L.A. Dad did some string arranging for the second and third White Heart albums. He's moving more into classical music now.

LR: Considering your dad's background, I would think you probably have had a lot of formal training.

DH: No, I was never formally trained, and I didn't even play in the school marching band. I learned in my basement by listening to records. I took lessons a couple of times, but each time I never took them for more than a week. In one lesson, the guy was trying to tell me how to hold my sticks the traditional way, and my middle finger would *not* stay on the left stick no matter how hard I tried. Today, I tell kids who are learning to play drums just to learn the way that feels the most comfortable.

LR: Did you ever learn to read music?

DH: I'm a self-taught reader. I used to go into my dad's filing cabinets in the base-

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Donnelly *continued from page 84*

Percussion, and I go through them pretty fast. Tonight, the pad was starting to wear out, and the glue was getting stuck to the bass drum beater! So the beater wasn't coming back the way it should have. But that's touring: Everything that can go wrong does, and usually when you don't want it to the most. I just keep on playing and try not to lose my momentum. When I was younger, when anything went wrong I'd say, "Forget it; the gig is ruined!" I'd give up too easily. Now, if anything goes wrong, I just do my best and keep plugging through it.

RVH: You don't have time to worry about things going wrong on this show. It's practically nonstop.

DD: That's right, and the drums are the main factor to the kids in New Edition. They know music well, but they know drums the best. They'll sit around and do "The Beat Box," making drum sounds verbally as part of that "street rap" routine. They know drums, and they know exactly what they want. They really rely on me for all their cues and accents. If something goes wrong with the kick, I usually go to the floor tom and keep the snare going, until Gary Spence, my drum tech, can fix the problem. Gary does a great job for me, especially when those kinds of problems happen. And they do happen—frequently. We were on live radio on a special broadcast from Boston recently, and on "Telephone Man" my bass drum did break. So I went right to the floor tom, the engineer EQ-ed it to sound like a bass drum, and nobody ever knew it except me.

RVH: What kind of pedal do you use?

DD: The *DW-5000* chain-drive, with a wood beater. I've tried some of the real heavy-duty ones with a lot of complicated mechanisms, but the simpler ones play faster. I've worked on my bass drum a lot, and I always work on the most complicated rhythms I can while maintaining the groove with a straight snare and hi-hat. I try to do stuff that a drum machine could do, so that we don't have to use a machine on stage. It's kind of my way of beating drum machines out of gigs. That way, when a certain kind of gig comes up, all the technique and chops I've worked on will come out, and I'll still have the groove thing happening when that's called for. You have to have metronomic timing to do anything in pop music today, because everything is set against drum machines or click tracks. The acts want you to sound like that—right on time—which is good; it should improve everybody's time. By 1990, we should all have perfect time!

RVH: For a New Edition show, the average audience member is a 13-year-old girl. I haven't heard so much screaming since the early Beatles days. How does that affect you on stage?

DD: Sometimes the screaming gets so loud that it's actually louder than the music. And it gets ear-piercing, because the screaming gets picked up by the onstage mic's, so it's coming through the monitors as well. It can be annoying, just as far as concentrating on the music goes. But in a sense, it's fun. You really feel the appreciation for the show—the dancing and the music. I try to look at the positive side: If they weren't screaming, the group wouldn't be out here doing these shows, movies, and commercials.

RVH: You play in a very stylized Spanish costume, and the band introduced you with the nickname of "Zorro." Where did this character come from?

DD: I've always liked hats. I was on a trip to Mexico to play some Latin gigs and found this Zorro-looking hat at a bullfight. I never planned on wearing it; I nailed it up on my wall in L.A. as a souvenir. One day, I was real busy, with several gigs the same day, and my hair looked real messy. I had a lot of new people that I wanted to look alright for, but I had no time at all. So I just pulled the hat down and threw it on. Pretty soon, I got to wearing it more and more, and everyone started calling me "Zorro"—sort of as a joke. The name really got established with New Edition. When I walked into the rehearsal studio the first day, I had thrown the hat on, and I was wearing all black clothes besides. One of the other band members said, "This guy looks like Zorro." Some of them thought that *was* my name, and the next thing I knew, the name had stuck. So I decided to keep it as my "character." It feels good, because I do have a Latin family background, and I feel that, if I'm going to have an "image," I want one I can feel comfortable with. I do spell my "Zoro" with one "r," just to be a little different.

Being in a show like this, you really have to be a part *of the show.* So I dress up; I use the Rapisarda lighted tip sticks; I try to jump into the show as much as I can. Guitar players do it; singers do it. There's no reason why a drummer can't be as "out front" as the next person. After all, the drummer is the most important person in the band: The drummer holds it all together.

RVH: I notice that you play with Beato gloves. Is that part of the "image," or are they functional?

DD: I sweat a lot—what with the lights, and the adrenaline flowing—and I play extremely hard. So without the gloves, I lose the sticks. And if I can't hang onto the sticks, there's no gig! I used to think that the gloves were just for looks, until I started playing the really heavy R&B gigs. Now I don't play anything but light jazz gigs without them. I also use *Stick Handler* tape on the sticks themselves.

RVH: Run down your touring kit for us.

DD: My snare is a Tama *Bell Brass* that just sounds beautiful. It cracks and has depth at the same time. My kit is the Tama *Superstar* series with power toms and *Titan* hardware. The rack toms are 10", 12", 13", 14", and 15", and the floors are 16" and 18". The bass drum is a 22". I have all the toms mounted with the RIMS system, and I use Duraline heads. I also use *Lug Locks* all the way around the snare—top and bottom—to hold in the tuning. If I don't, the snare is out of tune within three songs. I don't use any electronics on my kit, but I do add a pair of LP timbales for tonal color. My cymbals are all Sabians, in their *HH* series: 13" hi-hats, a 22" ride, an 8" splash, an 18" swish, and 15", 17", and 18" crashes. And I hit everything with Vic Firth *American Classic Rock* sticks.

RVH: You mentioned New Edition being a big step in your career. Where do you see that taking you?

DD: Well, I've already done a wide variety of things: everything from garage bands to the backs of pickup trucks to a cruise gig in the Bahamas to outdoor concerts with Philip Bailey, and now this gig. I'll try to do as many things as I can, in order to be ready for anything. I'm planning on a solo career in the future, but right now I'm developing myself as a drummer in the industry. An old man once told me that "success is when preparation meets opportunity." You just have to get ready for something to happen, and when your chance comes, if you're ready, you're going to go. If you're not, you're going to stay behind. I try to maintain that enthusiasm. I practice every day; I don't want to get into the rut of thinking that, now that I have a steady gig, I don't have to woodshed anymore. I've just started to scratch the surface, and if I keep going, maybe one day I'll achieve all my musical dreams.

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Huff continued from page 85

merit, take out some of the percussion charts, and try to follow along—reading them as I played the tape Dad had of his arrangement. I would just force my eyes and ears to see and hear things together.

I had a lot of help from Kenny Malone. He was actually the guy who got me interested in drumming. He used to play sessions for my dad all the time, and he would set up a chair in the drum booth, get a set of headphones for me, and let me sit in there with him.

Kenny would talk to me between takes and point out things on the charts. I'll never forget that, because I was in the ninth grade and had just started playing drums. Kenny was an incredible player, but I don't think he ever got the recognition that he deserved. He was based in jazz, and jazz obviously doesn't get enough credit.

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LR: Did you really get much session work in Nashville where you had to read charts?

DH: Not that much, but I used to ask for them just for the experience. My goal had always been to be a session player in L.A., and I knew most session players in L.A. had to be able to read.

LR: How well do you think Nashville drummers measure up to the competition elsewhere?

DH: Nashville's got a lot of good drummers. Everybody tends to think of Nashville as country & western music, and it *is* behind in pop music, but it's progressing real fast. A good example is Larrie Londin. He's considered a country drummer, but he played on Steve Perry's solo album. I'm anything but a country drummer. I've played on few, if any, country sessions.

LR: How would you evaluate Nashville studios for recording drums?

DH: There are some great ones.

LR: I talked to a former Nashville drummer who told me that, when he started recording here, it seemed like drums were just something that got in an engineer's way.

DH: I used to get some of the strangest looks from people in Nashville, because for a long time my drum sound just didn't fit in here. They used to say, "You get the most *unique* sound," but they'd say *unique* kind of funny so that I'd get the hint.

Stylewise, I fit in better on the West Coast, because I'm a rock 'n' roll and R&B drummer. One weekend, I went out to L.A. and recorded with a fabulous engineer. He had recorded a bunch of drummers who are like my idols. I didn't even have time to tune my drums when I got there. I just unpacked them and set them up. We started working on miking my kick, and pretty soon the engineer came out of the control room and just looked at me. I was beginning to get nervous. He asked me what I had done to my kick. I told him nothing, and then he said that was one of the best kick sounds he had ever heard.

LR: How *do* you get your kick sound?

DH: I used a white-coated head on the batter side. On the other side, it varies. Sometimes I cut a hole on the front just big enough to stick in a mic'. For muffling, I use a packing blanket that I bought from a packing company. It's so thick that I cut it in half and just use half of it.

I'm currently endorsing the *DW 5000* pedal, made by Drum Workshop. It's a real heavy-duty, chain-driven pedal, and I just love it. I shave one side of the beater flat, so more of its surface hits the head. I can get a meatier sound that way.

LR: When you were talking about how well your sound is suited to the L.A. recording scene, I got the impression that L.A. is very special to you.

DH: I went to college at a small Christian school in L.A. for a year, and *that's* where I did most of my learning as a player. Actually, I was studying sociology. I never studied music in college, because I had so much of it in the studio. What they were teaching in the music curriculum wasn't something I was interested in.

Every Monday night, I used to go to a club and hear a band that included a friend of mine named Alex Acuna—who's a great drummer and percussionist—and a bass player named Abraham Laboriel. They were probably two of the biggest influences on me in L.A. I also went to the same club to hear Jeff Porcaro. After I watched Jeff, I would be inspired to go home and practice. I kept my drums in one of the school music rooms. Nobody knew it, but inside the cases I kept my stereo. So after I drove home from hearing Jeff, I'd set up my drums and stereo, and practice until about 5:30 A.M.

I moved back to Nashville about the time White Heart was getting started. I'd done a couple of sessions in L.A., but I knew I needed to go back to Nashville to get more experience before I could move to L.A. for good.

LR: Judging from what you've told me about your style and the drummers who influenced you, I get the impression that you really like a tight, bright drum sound.

DH: I've always liked that sound, so with music coming around to the tight snare sound, it's coming around to a sound I feel comfortable with. For certain things, I liked the big fat sound, but it didn't suit my playing.

Remo makes a *PTS* pretuned snare drum that I use sometimes when people ask for a real tight sound. All you have to do is snap the head on the drum. You can buy the heads in three tunings: bright, medium, and soft. I buy the bright one. The drum is very inexpensive and very light. Actually, it's sold for kids' sets.

LR: What kinds of heads do you prefer?

DH: On snares, I usually use white-coated *Ambassadors,* but on my metal snare, I use a *Black Dot.* On the tom-toms, I use clear *Emperors* on the top and white-coated *Ambassadors* on the bottom, because I hit very hard. The *Emperor* seems to last longer, but it also suits my sound.

LR: Do you have a problem with heads breaking?

DH: Not a lot. I don't change the kick batter more than about once every year or so. When playing live, I change the other heads every five or six shows, and for sessions, I change them about every other session. This is true especially for the snare drum.

LR: How many snare drums do you use?

DH: About five or six, for different sounds. The drum I use live, and also in the studio, the most often is a 5 1/2 X 14 metal drum made by Pearl. I also have a 5 1/2 X 14 brass Ludwig snare drum, which is very suitable for rock 'n' roll—very bright and

loud. I have a deep wooden one that I use for ballads, because wood is a warmer kind of sound and isn't so harsh. And one of my snare drums has a contact mic' hooked up to the batter head. I run that through my Simmons brain.

LR: Don't rock drummers usually lean more towards deep snare drums?

DH: In heavy metal, that's still the case, but for the most part, a lot of people are going back to the tight snare drum sound, like Yes and the Police.

LR: Can't a deep snare drum be tuned for that kind of sound?

DH: Yes, but to me, each drum's got a certain range where it sounds good, and once you go past that, it starts sounding choked.

LR: How compatible is your sound with the taste of the engineers you work with in the studios?

DH: I used to tune for engineers. Now, I don't do that. They hire me for my sound and my playing, and I tune my drums to where they're suitable for my playing. That's not cocky. I just have confidence in myself now.

LR: Do you have a particular approach to tuning?

DH: Nothing I can explain. On the snare drum, I keep the bottom head a little tighter, and on the tom-toms, I keep the bottom ones a little looser.

LR: How much difference is there in the setup of your acoustic equipment on stage and in the studio?

DH: I use the same set live and in the studio. It's a set of wooden, natural-finish Pearl drums. They're maple, and I think they have a very melodic tone. I have a 22 x 16 kick, and my toms are 10", 12", 13", and 16". I had some *RotoToms* for a while, but because I hit so hard, all I could hear from them was attack. I've heard them sound great live, but they don't work for me.

All my cymbals are Zildjian. There's a 20" *China Boy,* which is extremely loud, a 20" Rock ride, two 18" crashes (I think one is medium and one is medium-thin), and one 16" medium crash.

I also have two sets of 14" hi-hats—Rocks and *Quick Beats.* For live work, I have an extra hi-hat adaptor that fits on a stand that I place right about where a ride cymbal would go. I use that hi-hat like a ride, so I can have enough room to hit the snare harder with my left hand.

I have memory locks on all my hardware except my cymbal stands, because I never set my cymbals up the same way twice. I grew up setting up my drums around engineers, and after they would mike my drums, *then* I'd set up my cymbals.

LR: I know you are using some electronic equipment too. What kind of overall setup do you use on stage?

DH: I have a different setup than most people. I set up a regular acoustic set in the middle with the drum machine right behind me. For White Heart, I would program about three total songs on the drum machine, so that all I had to do was find the tune and the tempo and punch in the song.

Over to the left, I have a set of Simmons electronic drums, with three tom-toms set up about chest-high and the snare drum in the middle. I'll play those standing up, just to do fills over whatever I've programmed on the drum machine. It gives me freedom to move around. With Michael Smith, I also have a set of timbales that I set up over to the right of my acoustic set.

LR: Do you do very much percussion work?

DH: I grew up playing other percussion instruments, but as my career became more defined, I decided to stick to one area. Moneywise, I find it better to stay just with drums. That's expensive enough.

LR: Do you think playing other percussion instruments—congas or timbales for instance—can affect the way a drummer approaches the trap set?

DH: I'm sure it does. Alex Acuna, who's a world-renowned percussionist, also plays drums, and I think it affects his playing because he plays drums a different way.

LR: Being a drummer who uses electronic equipment so much, you seem to be very interested in acoustic sounds. How do you feel about the effect electronics has had on drumming in general?

DH: The acoustic set will never be replaced. The advent of electronic percussion made me nervous at first—but only because I couldn't afford to buy any of the stuff. I had to learn to use it just by watching, and then wait until I was able to buy it.

I try to use electronic drums to enhance the acoustic set. There's a jingle company here in Nashville for whom I do a lot of work just programming the drum machine. After I program the song, perhaps I'll erase the electronic snare and play back over the track with my *PTS* snare. That gives sort of a human feel and a bit more energy to the sound. Or maybe I'll play regular hi-hat and snare, and let everything else be the drum machine. On the last White Heart album, I experimented with using the normal kick and snare with the Simmons tom-toms on some songs, while on others, I used the normal tom-toms and kick with the Simmons snare.

LR: What's it like being a professional musician and having an older brother who's already a successful session player in L.A.? Are you two competitive?

DH: Dan's a phenomenal guitar player, and we're real close. He's a year and a half older than me, and he moved to L.A. about two years ago. It was a good time for me, because it allowed me time to mature and find my own identity as a musician. Dan had already established himself. I plan to move out to L.A., but I'm not sure when. That's been a dream that Dan and I have had: to be studio players together in L.A.

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***Fadden** continued from page 33*

RF: We touched on this in the *Update* we did a couple of years back, but you play the drums and harmonica simultaneously.

JF: I've been playing harmonica a lot longer than I've played drums, and I really enjoy playing the instrument. Oddly enough, some of my first playing experiences were with playing harmonica in a rack. The rack is the little wire contraption that holds the harmonica in front of your mouth and goes around your neck, a la Bob Dylan and Neil Young. I found it was very easy for me to play that way. I'm now using a Shure *SM-10* microphone, which is a headset mic'. It virtually follows my mouth wherever I move it. I found that it was fairly easy for me to play drums and harmonica, by virtue of the fact that, whenever I play harmonica, I always tap my feet. I used to go out to the garage, sit in a chair, put the old metronome on, and tap my feet—right-left, right-left, right-left. It wasn't all that difficult for me to translate that into playing set and harmonica at the same time.

RF: Are there things you can't do or that are difficult to do while playing both?

JF: Normally, when I'm playing a solo on the harmonica, I'm just playing time on the drums. It might be just playing an 8th-note, two-handed feel on the hi-hat with an accompanying bass drum pattern, or I might just be playing snare drum, hi-hat, and bass drum. I do play some fills, occasionally at the end of a solo, but I'll just be playing one finishing note of the solo on the harmonica. All I'm doing is inhaling and playing the drum fill. It's pretty simple.

RF: What are some of your favorite songs to play live?

JF: I really like playing "Will The Circle Be Unbroken," because I play a sneaky version of a shuffle that nobody catches on to. It comes out of that accented 8th-note brush feel with sticks. I end up going to the ride and accenting on the left hand as opposed to the right hand. It's a lot of fun. I enjoy those types of implied feels. I've always admired players who were able to do that. A lot of the New Orleans players are very good at that. Jim Keltner was a great influence in that respect. He's always had a great innuendo in his playing—likewise, Steve Gadd.

RF: What other tunes do you enjoy playing?

JF: I like playing the whole set to be quite honest with you.

RF: You've been playing "Mr. Bojangles" since 1972. How do you keep something like that fresh?

JF: I'm not sure there's a real pat answer for that. That's a great example that we can draw from, because it has been played so much. The song has a basic life of its own, but it lives vicariously through the audience, which adds another dimension to it. Sometimes we do a shortened version in a medley with "Some Of Shelly's Blues," but we added an instrumental to it, which was never on the record, between Johnny and me where I put the brushes down and pick up the harmonica. To play harp while you're playing 3/4 is very interesting. Playing 4/4 or 2/4 is really easy, because your left foot doesn't have to do double duty with the double back beat there, like with 3/4. Recently, Jimmy stopped playing the bass in the last verse, and I've gone down to just playing the bass drum and hi-hat. I've added a floor tom beat in there to make it sound like a marching drum, like the old, open bass drum sound. There are just little things that happen from night to night that make everything interesting. I can't think of any two nights in a row that are the same. Some nights things are a little quicker. Some nights they're a little slower. Acoustics in the rooms we play have a lot to do with that. If you have a room with a long decay time, you need to play things a little slower. If you play too fast, it can just become a jumbled mess. That's something you learn along the way, and I'm still learning more about it. Some nights are really magical, where the dynamics are so overwhelming that I'm just sitting back there on automatic, enjoying what's going on. I'll be playing along, enjoying "Bojangles" so much that I just think to myself, "We've been playing this song for a long time, but it's still fun and I love hearing it." I can listen to what we're doing, as opposed to being concerned about my role, which is the nice part of it. A lot of times, if you're playing something that is improvisational, where you really have to be thinking and be on the ball, you have to listen so closely to what everybody else is doing, that your ears don't get a chance to take everything else in. You're concerned with the interaction between you and the bass player, and listening to what's going on up front. You don't always get to savor the moment. When you've done something for a long enough time and you have an arrangement in your head, you know what to play, and you can watch the audience and the other members in the band. It sort of flows like the river, and it's amazing.

RF: Were you playing drums during the *Jealousy* period of time?

JF: I didn't play in the studio on that particular project. I arranged the drum parts, and Rick Schlosser did the studio work on that album. I rehearsed with the band, came up with the arrangements and did the work tapes. Bob Edwards, who was producing the album at the time, had worked with Rick and liked his playing very much. When it comes down to dollars and notes, as it is in the studio so often, it's important to be extremely proficient and get your work done quickly. He knew he could count on Rick to do it, whereas he hadn't worked with me in that capacity. Rick liked my arrangements very much, so he played basically what I gave him.

RF: By the time you took over the drum seat once again, you were dealing primarily with the country tunes, is that correct?

JF: We still do that rock stuff, though, occasionally. We do play "Cadillac Ranch," so we play it all. This band runs the gamut of styles.

RF: Regarding styles, if we go way back, we're talking about . . .

JF: Fred Waring & The Pennsylvanians. We've always liked a variety of music. Everybody in the group has different musical interests, and they all come together, hopefully, to form a cohesive whole. I think the texture of our music might be more interesting than if we all listened to the same thing all the time. I think the chances of influences from one source creating something interesting are pretty slim. That's a common facet of most groups that come together for one reason or another: They all have different interests in music. John enjoys bluegrass and the more country side of things. Jeff and Ibbie like rockabilly and the more vocal-oriented things, such as the Everly Brothers and Buddy Holly. Bobby Carpenter, the keyboard player, has a very wide scope of interests from classical pieces to jazz. In fact, Bobby and I get together and commit jazz crimes occasionally. We have to watch out that the jazz police aren't listening. I enjoy a lot of different things. One of my earlier influences was bluegrass, and then I became very interested in blues. I like music that is very earthy and very emotional.

RF: What about playing considerations when you look back on Fred Waring & The Pennsylvanians?

JF: The greatest thing I got from a lot of the early big band music was the attitude of the music. It swung. If you can't swing it, then hang it up.

RF: So how do you swing a band?

JF: I don't know how to explain it. You just do it. How do you breathe? I don't know. It just happens. You have to feel it, and they have to feel it. You have to give them the chance to be comfortable in what you're doing, so they can work as effortlessly as possible.

RF: What about audiences? Are they different in the pop world than they are in the country world?

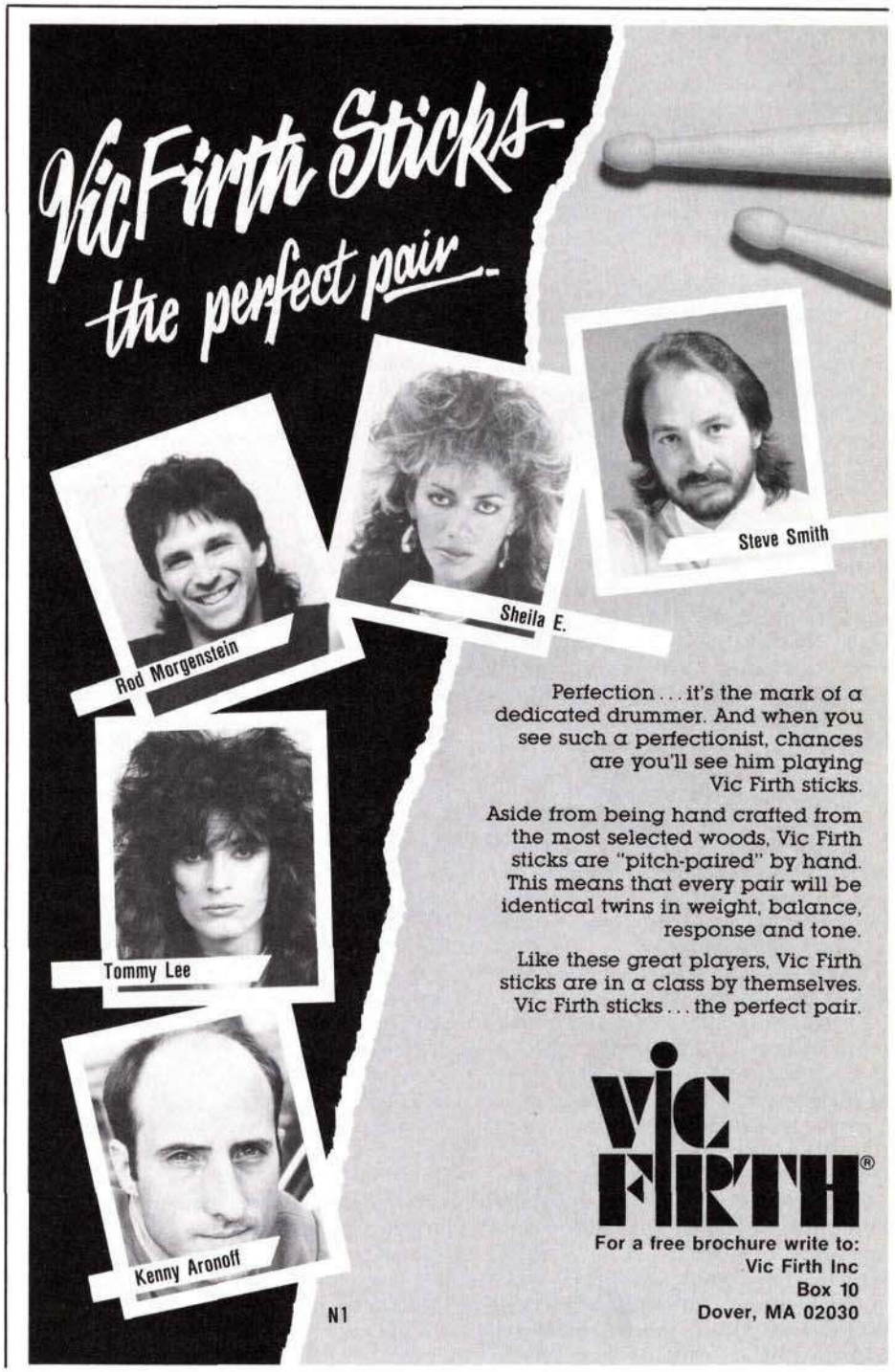
JF: I think people are people anywhere you play. I think it's what you play that makes audiences what they are and determines how they react. If you're going to perform poorly, then you can expect an audience to react poorly. You have to go out and give it 100% every night, if not 110%, and it's a mutual thing of give and take. It's you giving to them and them giving to you in return. It's a vicious little circle, and it's a great feeling. I think it's one that anyone who has spent any time on stage lives for. Most of the time, we can forget the hotels, the travel, and the baloney sandwiches as long as that audience is there. We've played large arenas in rock shows and small clubs where it was strictly a group of people who were accustomed to hearing honky-tonk music. We've played in big bars where people dance and auditoriums where people sit down. We've played some of the finest halls in the country, such as Carnegie Hall three times, and some of the finest halls in Japan.

RF: In 1977, you were the first American band chosen to tour Russia. What was it like playing over there?

JF: Russia is another story. It was very interesting, to say the least. The interest on the part of the musicians we encountered there was astounding. I was given questions I didn't know the answers to most of the time, like what kind of sticks Buddy Rich uses. I don't know. These people over there were starved for information, and they loved music.

RF: Didn't you play at conservatories over there?

JF: We went to a union conservatory, where it was strictly union players. In order to be a union player, you have to be *accepted* into the union, not like what we have here where you can become a member of the union with dollars. In being accepted, you have to be a player or performer of material which is pro-Soviet. There are quite a few underground players in the Soviet Union. They're very interested in all types of music. Jazz is very popular there, as is some of the earlier rock 'n'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roll. They're interested in things that might be considered more eclectic than the standard American market, but they don't—or didn't at the time we were there—have a wide variety of records to listen to. What they did have that was worth listening to had to be purchased on the black market, which was an iffy business at best.

RF: Earlier, you mentioned the baloney sandwiches and the hotel rooms, and I was thinking about the 20 years you've spent on the road. How does that affect you in your personal and musical life, and how has that changed through the years?

JF: I think I'm more emotional and more sensitive about music. I don't have the time to get involved in some aspects to the degree that I would like to, what with having a family and a busy touring schedule. I don't get to spend a lot of time practicing. When you get six hours off to sleep, eat, do an interview, or practice, the chances are you try to eat a little and sleep. I wouldn't give it up, though. I can't see doing anything else with my life. I really enjoy the guys I work with, and I think I would have to, most obviously, in order to continue working with them. It's nice playing with people you understand musically and otherwise. Everybody has his little quirk. Steve Martin had a great line. He said, "This guy was the type of guy it took you five years to get to know, and then he changed." If I had to deal with that problem on a day-to-day basis, I couldn't do it. That doesn't happen with us, because everyone knows what everyone else is like. If somebody is in a bad mood, we can spot it right off, or if somebody is in a good mood, we can spend more time with that person. The one thing that always is the same is that, when we go on stage, we are all 100% professional. I can count on them to give what they feel is expected of them, which is what the audience expects of them, and that is the best that they can do.

RF: How often, on the average, do you get to see your family?

JF: Probably twice a month, for anywhere from four to eight days sometimes. We work an average of three weeks a month, from May until December. Then we record in January and February.

RF: What about the disadvantages of playing with the same people for 20 years?

JF: One of the disadvantages is that, within our group, we work with a particular group idea and genre. We don't have the advantage of picking up and going off into something entirely different if we want to, because there are certain things expected of us by our audience. While I might like to expand my musical vocabulary a little bit and get involved in some jazz, I don't have that opportunity unless I do that on my own time at home. Like I was saying earlier, Bob and I dabble with that in the afternoon, just because he has the ability to play certain things that are beyond me, and it's a real challenge to work at things like that.

RF: It's no secret that some years have been better for the band than others. How does one keep one's morale up during those down years?

JF: I think that's a matter of working with a group. I think we pull together as a group to keep our morale up. It's like any other situation for any player who has a job where, at one point, it does become a job. Then, that person has to work at enjoying something that is a little less enjoyable than it had been in the past. But if you look at it this way, there are a lot of people out of work, and I'm really happy to have a job and to be able to play for the number of people that we've garnered over the years that we've been together. I am understanding of situations where people are a little less than excited about what they might have at the moment—maybe playing at the Holiday Inn for six months. It's a matter of going out and working for what you want. If going through some bad times for a little while is part of it, then that's part of it. We've had a lot of ups and downs. We've never been in the big, big time. We've been on some big stages and done some big shows, but I don't think I could stand a steady diet of that, to tell you the truth. I like a variety of experiences, and I think the guys in the band would agree with me on that.

The one positive aspect of not working so much is that it affords me more time to practice and get involved in some sideline projects, like doing a little writing, producing, and spending some time by myself in the studio, applying some of the things I learned early on in our career with Dino Lappas. He was one of our first engineers in California, and I learned a lot about what to do when you're recording 4-track. We recorded a lot of 4-track stuff, and in doing so, we learned how things are supposed to sound to begin with. There was no, "We'll fix it in the mix." It had to be right. People miked drums differently then, and the ensemble concept was a little freer. If you go back and listen to some of the really old Janis Joplin and Jefferson Airplane records, you can hear that everybody was just sort of doing what they wanted. It all fit, but it's nothing like what you listen to on the radio today, as a tight rhythm section. Time off gives me a chance to expand that part of my musical interests. Everybody in the group, to one degree or another, has spent some time behind the board, and I think it's beneficial for us, as a group, to understand how that works. You can't go into the studio and expect a producer to understand what you want without being able to explain it.

RF: You only played on half of the current album. Which drum tracks did you do?

JF: The other drummer is Eddie Bayers, who is one of the great Nashville studio drummers. I played on "Telluride," "Putt-Putt," "Red Neck Riviera," "Leon MacDuff"—most of the brushwork. That's sort of my forte. I don't know why, but it's something I learned playing behind John on the bluegrass numbers. It's a typical country drum style. I think you discussed this with Larrie Londin, and there was an example along with that interview. It's an accented 8th note with the backbeat being on the right hand, so it's a little backwards for some people to approach. Once you get the hang of it, it's pretty simple. Your fills are all left lead, which is a little goofy sometimes. I use *Blasticks,* which are relatively new in the last couple of years, because they give me a nice, fat sound. They have a plastic handle or a wooden handle, and you can get a good click on the rim, which almost sounds like someone playing slap bass. If you use the brush drum effect with a standard bass, you get what sounds like the old brush and slap bass effect, which is so common on a lot of the Elvis things that D.J. Fontana played. As you start playing a little harder with the old wire brushes, they have the tendency to either bend, break, or blow up. The new plastic brushes don't do that.

RF: What about your equipment?

JF: I've gone through a lot of different things. I've got an old set of Leedys that are maple, which have a great sound. I bought them in the late '60s, and I still have those. I have a few odd pieces, like my 28" Ludwig bass drum, which I love. I have an old Ludwig *Black Beauty* concert snare—which is no longer black, but brass—with the tube tension castings. At one time, it was a 6 1/2" concert snare with a top snare and a bottom snare, as well. I use it in the studio and like it very much. I have another old 6 1/2" Ludwig mahogany snare, two Gretsch snare drums, and an old Rogers, which I like very much. I have an affliction that a lot of people have: finding the great snare drum. At the moment, though, I'm playing a Gretsch set that I love very much. I've always loved the drums. I just never had the inclination to go out and buy a big, brand new set. I'd been playing on a lot of old things that I'd played for so long and seemed to be okay. After a while, as all things that are on the road for too long will do, my old drums got a little cranky and hard to deal with. I got my new set in May 1984, and that set consists of an 8 x 10, a 0 x 12, a 12x 14, and a 14x 16, which is kind of current in the country field, as far as tom-tom setup goes. The bass drum is a 24 x 16, and the snare drum is an 8", 20 lug, which I like a lot. I can't think of another set of drums that I want.

I'm endorsing Zildjian cymbals, and my current setup is, starting from my left, a 14" or 16" paper thin, an 18" medium, which might constitute a crash/ride, and a 20" K. ride. On top of that is a 10" splash.

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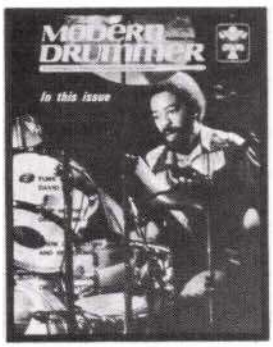

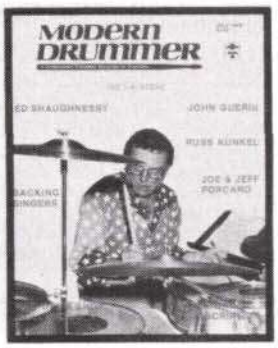

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Fadden *continued from page 92*

On my far right, I have a 16" K. dark crash on top of an 18" China, stacked like Ginger Baker used to, with the last post going through the China.

I have a few other little goodies in my setup, such as an old Ludwig copper-plated timbale, which came out of a set that Jeff gave me for Christmas one year. I use that on things like "American Dream," which has a little Latin flavor. I use that behind a set of Gon Bops raquinto and raconga, which are small hand drums. I play those with the *Blasticks* in a few arrangements, such as on "Ripplin' Waters," although sometimes I play them with sticks.

I read a lot of articles about drummers who are asked to perform a lot of different functions in a band, such as being able to play a lot of percussion, which people hear on the records. Some of my setup has stemmed from that. There are songs where I don't even hit a tom-tom, like on the bluegrass numbers, yet I'm sitting there with four in front of me. I don't particularly use all my drums all the time, but I use a lot of it for coloration in the music. That's my main interest in the way I play. The tom-tom setup is advantageous when I'm playing a lot of the slower material, which opens it up to long melodic fills. We've had some tambourine parts on our records that required playing, so I mounted a Rhythmtech tambourine horizontally over my hi-hat, which I play with a stick. I put it on a cymbal stand top with a multi-clamp on one of my stands, and it works great. I like to try to figure out ways of using the set to a different advantage, use it for different things, and try to apply some ideas to some arrangements to see if they work out. For the most part, they do.

RF: You play with the butt end of the stick.

JF: The reason for that, aside from the fact that it sounds good, is that, in the type of music we do, there are a lot of cross-stick passages. I'll play a whole verse cross-stick and go to the chorus on a B section with an open snare drum. There's no way you can play with matched tips and get a good cross-stick sound. I was trying to figure out why I was playing with the butt all the time, and it was right in front of my face. It's just the nature of the music.

RF: You're also using the RIMS.

JF: Right. I wasn't quite sure what kind of effect it would have on the sound of the drums, but I ordered them because I'm a real nut for things that look like they'll be great. For drummers who want a more live sound in their sets, I would recommend them highly. They've also come up with a set of *PTS* heads that are mounted on RIMS, and they have a whole little set that folds up. They sound amazingly good.

I've gone back to using Remo white *Emperor* heads on all my drums—the coated on the snare and the smooth on the tom-toms—with *Ambassadors* on the bottom. I use very little tape. Occasionally, I have to put a little piece on there to get an overtone out when I don't have time to tune it out. All the drums are double-headed.

The microphone system I'm using now is the Aquarian System, and it works very well for me in that I don't have any microphone stands that might slip during the show, which is always disconcerting. It's very easy to travel with also.

RF: When I met you, we were kids. You've gone through a lot with this band. Certainly, there is some knowledge that you can impart. You must have been naive when you were a kid.

JF: Everyone is. One of the great gifts that you get coming into this world is your naivete. One of the sad things is that you lose it. It's something you never get back.

RF: But from a business standpoint, you must have acquired a wealth of information.

JF: Music is not an easy business. It's a great joy to play, but the business is so difficult to be in that it kind of keeps things even. For anybody who is thinking about getting into it, it's hard work. You have to dedicate yourself to all the aspects of it. You have to be able to take the good with the bad. It's a great life, too. I have two weeks off sometimes, and I see people who are getting up and going to work at the office at 8:00 in the morning and getting home at 6:00, while I'm sitting on my porch reading a magazine. But then again, there are times when all they have to do is drive five miles to work, and I'm flying to Alaska to do a show. You have to love it. If you don't love it, you shouldn't even think about it, because you're going to get things and situations thrown at you that you never even imagined. It can be real tedious. You can get to a show and find out that Air Freight has lost your snare drum. Somebody could drop something in baggage, and you'll have a hole in your bass drum head. You might check out in a blurry situation and leave your stick bag in the hotel room. Any number of silly little things can happen to you, but I think the greatest reward is playing for an audience and having them appreciate what it is you do. In turn, you go on doing it.

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by Rick Van Horn

Boo Boo McAfee
On The Country

It's 3:00 in the afternoon, prior to an evening 's performance by country-rock group Atlanta, in Rutland, Vermont. The stage is erected, the trailers have arrived, the equipment has been unloaded, and the lights are ready to be positioned. Obviously, the roadies and stagehands are hard at work at their various assignments, right? Wrong. Absolutely nothing can be done until the horse racing is over.

The what? What kind of concert has to wait for the conclusion of horse racing before setting up? A concert played at a county or state fair, that's what. And that's only one of the unusual circumstances that are actually quite usual to the groups that play this very active circuit in the Midwest, South, and Northeast. There are also other factors to deal with, like weather, ground conditions, animals . . . the list goes on and on.

Obviously, this is a level of the music business that's quite a bit different from arena-rock tours, with their relatively controlled environments and tightly scheduled setup situations. And yet each year, many talented artists, primarily in the country and country-rockfields, take to the road to follow the fair circuit. Atlanta is such an act, spending much of the year playing grandstand shows on a grueling schedule of one-nighters. MD *spoke with drummer Boo Boo McAfee and stage manager/drum technician Curly Whitaker about the problems, the fun, and the idiosyncracies of the country fair circuit.*

RVH: Boo Boo, how long have you been working with Atlanta?

BM: I've just celebrated one year. Prior to that, I worked with Donna Fargo for six years, as well as with the Bellamy Brothers. In 1981, I established a Guinness World Record for marathon drumming, just as a personal achievement goal. A lot has been made of that, but that's not what I want to base my career on or be remembered for.

RVH: Did your gigs with Donna and the Bellamys include venues like this one?

BM: Yes. During the summertime, most of the acts out of Nashville do the state and county fairs. It's a big source of income for them in the summer.

RVH: Curly, how long has Atlanta been on this tour?

CW: We started the fair season on June 1, and that part of our tour will extend through the end of September.

BM: We haven't been doing a set tour schedule of two months on and then a couple of weeks off. With the overhead that we have, we're out for ten and a half months a year. I've been home seven days since January 16, and today is September 5.

CW: We're basically an arena entourage doing a country fair circuit. We're categorized as country music, but with the style and manner in which we travel, we might as well be a full-blown rock production.

RVH: What's your average travel distance between venues?

CW: Last year, it was about 275 to 300 miles. This year, for some ungodly reason, it's been anywhere from 500 to 600 miles a night, which has been a little hairy for the drivers. It's not too bad on the crew. We have to work a little faster when we get there, but we get lots of sleep on the way!

BM: The days that we do have "off" are usually travel days—between 16 to 24 solid hours of riding.

CW: That's right. You sit on the bus and vibrate until you get to the next location.

RVH: How does the group travel?

BM: We have a band bus, a crew bus, and a semi-tractor for the sound and lighting equipment. But it hasn't always been that luxurious. The first time I was out with this group, we had two Ryder trucks and an RV for the road crew. The crew had to drive the trucks and the RV. We didn't have separate drivers. So basically, it was three people driving and three people sleeping, all the time, which didn't do a whole lot for morale. Then we'd get to the venue, jump on stage, and have at it.

RVH: You can't complete your setup or do a soundcheck until much later than you'd like today, because of a horse race. That sort of situation certainly doesn't arise on the average arena-rock tour.

CW: From what I've seen, it seems like the promoters cater mostly to the artists on those tours. If you play county or state fairs, the act has to more or less cater to the promoter, because there are so many other things going on. There are some places where the grandstand is totally ours from the time we get there at 10:00 in the morning until show time. Other times, we have to deal with what we have here today, which is pari-mutuel harness racing. They own the grounds until they are finished, which is usually around 5:30 in the evening. These folks here seem to be a bit stiffer than usual about our working during the racing, because the judges can't see all the areas of the track if we get the stage completely set up. In other places, we can work with them a bit more.

RVH: This is a level of the business that MD hasn't had a chance to cover before now. I'd love to hear more about the idiosyncracies of this type of touring.

CW: Well, we do run into some problems, and in some cases, we probably create some of them ourselves. For instance, our biggest drawback—for the crew anyway, and probably for the musicians as well—is that we'll start out fair season and get used to one set of hours. They're generally pretty great, because the band will finish a show around 10:00 P.M., and the crew will get finished around midnight or so. Then all of a sudden, we'll get a club thrown in on us where the band doesn't even go on stage until 11:30, and we don't get out of there until 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning. Then we have to come in and set up for a fair the next day at 10:00 in the morning. Everybody sort of walks around being

And Curly Whitaker:
Fair Circuit

nuts. And I think that's what happened to our sound engineer today. We had to put up with the problems of these racehorse judges, and it came down to a competition between the head horse judge and our engineer, who basically had a verbal confrontation that didn't lead to anything but more work for us. This is a very extreme case, though.

RVH: The most obvious thing that you have to deal with that most arena-rock acts don't is the fact that you are almost always outdoors. It's a whole different ball game, especially acoustically.

CW: Acoustically speaking, playing outdoors is a hell of a lot more fun than playing indoors. Indoors, you have weird echos to deal with, and time delays and phase changes in the halls. When you set up outside, you're pretty much guaranteed a good sound every night, as long as you've got enough power behind the sound system to get your music out.

RVH: But from a drummer's point of view, there is a problem with hearing the natural drum sound when playing outdoors. Boo Boo, how do you deal with that problem?

BM: Rob Jameson, our monitor man, is the answer to that. He's the main factor determining how I get through the night. Outside of the drum chair, Rob is in the hottest seat on stage. With this group, we've got nine artists—including our second drummer, Tony Ingram, who doubles on vocals out front, fiddle, and percussion. It's not like a single artist with a backup band. And Rob is trying to please all nine of us. He's mixing eight different mixes going into ten floor monitors.

RVH: Do you find yourself working harder, physically, simply because it's outdoors?

BM: Outdoors, with so much space, you do tend to hit harder. Also, if the wind is blowing, it just seems like you can't get things—even tempos—up to par sometimes. That seems to be because all the sound is leaving the kit so quickly and going off into the air.

RVH: Do you do any adjusting as far as tuning the kit goes, or use any special equipment to adapt to outdoor playing?

BM: We use the same cymbal setup, but the taping and the muffling of the drums will vary depending on where we're playing.

CW: Usually our biggest adjustment has to do with having to tune the drums when we go back indoors. Last year, when I first started working with this kit, I used to muffle the heads down a lot. This year, I've gotten away from that and tuned them wide open, except for the bass and snare.

BM: One of the greatest things about this kit is that, with the endorsements I have from Tama, Zildjian, and Pro-Mark, if Curly needs something, he can just call one of those companies, and the company will ship it so that it's there when we need it. If you have to depend on buying sticks or heads locally, with some of the small towns we play, it's a nightmare. I don't break that much stuff, but it's good to know that I can get what I need quickly from the companies I work with.

RVH: Are the one-nighters, with so many setups and breakdowns, especially hard on equipment?

CW: Well, most arena tours are also one-nighters. There are a few movable parts on the drumkit that do suffer due to the frequency of the setups and breakdowns. But in our situation, the elements—the wind, rain, dust, etc.—are especially hard on equipment. The dust takes the biggest toll on anything—that and if something gets directly rained on.

BM: That's another aspect of fairs that's different from the "average" tour: sitting around all day waiting to see if it's going to rain or not before you play.

RVH: Do you consider the danger of going out and playing in the rain, or do you try not to think about it?

CW: We do try to make it as easy for the group as we can. We'll tell the promoter, "Look, we know you want this show to go on on time. We do too, but there is a safety factor involved. We don't want anybody killed out there. Give us a few minutes to dry the stage off the best we can, and then we'll go with you." Most promoters are pretty cooperative. We just have to take what precautions we can to protect the equipment and the musicians, and use a little common sense.

BM: Wind is also a serious problem. When cymbals move in the wind, that's a nightmare.

CW: We had the wind come up one evening before show time in Oakland, Nebraska, and take out the cymbal stands on both drumkits.

BM: We've come to call this our "Mud And Dust Tour." Dust can settle on all the equipment very quickly when you're playing on racetrack infields.

CW: It's not too bad here today, because they water the track down—and besides, it's been drizzling all day. But sometimes we'll play a grandstand when they're not having races, and they won't bother to water the track down. The wind will come by, and the equipment stays constantly dirty.

BM: To complicate that, we all wear white tuxes. It's not enough to be out here trying to keep the gear clean; we have to maintain this clean-cut, "Southern Gentleman" look in the face of dust and/or mud much of the time.

CW: Weather does take its toll. One problem you have is that, with a gust of wind, the high end of the sound can be blown away. It just doesn't get from your speakers to the audience at all. And that can happen in the monitors, as well.

BM: I'll tell you a story about the kinds of things that happen on our shows. Four or

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five jobs ago, at the State College of Pennsylvania, the place was packed with three to four thousand people, and it started raining about 15 minutes before show time. It was a real nice stage—covered and protected for us. But when we walked on stage, only about a quarter of the people were still sitting in the grandstands. Luckily, by three songs into the show, almost everybody was back. They had just gone to their cars or their campers to get umbrellas and rain gear. They were there to see the show, rain or no rain.

Just as we were starting to feel real good about that, the entire monitor system went out. All I could hear was the echo back from the grandstand, which was across the track and then set back another 25 feet or more. What was happening was that the sound would go out and come back, and the time just went in and out as the echo came and went. That was another nightmare.

RVH: Every time I've ever seen a grandstand show, there was that "gulf" created between the artist and the audience by the track. Does that distance factor bother you?

BM: Yes, it does. It can sometimes be very hard to hear the audience response, and we can feel like we're playing in a vacuum.

CW: In a lot of cases, an hour before show time the fair will put chairs out on the track and bring the audience right up to the stage. That is, of course, unless it has been raining severely, like it did in Peotone, Illinois, where the track was literally turned into a moat. The only person stuck out in that mud bath was our sound engineer, who was slowly sinking into the mud along with the board. He would have been set up in the stands, but we didn't have the length of cable necessary in that location.

BM: In some places, they have a chain-link fence that runs from the top of the grandstand right down to the ground, because they run stock cars and demolition derbies on the track. The fence is there to protect the crowd from flying dirt. A lot of times we've come in afterwards, and there have been chunks of mud still stuck in the fence, partially blocking the audience's view of the stage. Our act is very visual—we thrive on give and take between the group and the audience—and to walk out there and face a *fence, besides* the distance . . . .It's tough to get anything happening.

RVH: So how do you deal with that?

BM: Usually, when you come out during the day, you can tell how much psyching it's going to take to get yourself up. At times, you just have to grit your teeth and bear the problems. We mentioned the wind blowing the band's sound away; that can also happen with the crowd noise. I've played gigs where I could see the crowd clapping, but I couldn't hear them at all. It was like watching TV with the sound turned off—very weird. It can be discouraging, because we try to put out 100%, and that's hard to do when you feel like the people aren't giving that energy back to you. You know you've got to give it first, but you need it to be recycled back, so that you can give more. When that doesn't happen, it's very disappointing, and in some cases, we *think* that it isn't happening, just due to the distance and the fact that we can't hear the audience. We'll walk off stage saying, "Well, they were a reserved crowd," or "We just didn't catch them." And then, all of a sudden, we'll hear a demand for an encore, with the crowd just going crazy! And we'll wonder what happened: Where did we miss that during the show? It's just the distance.

One thing we have to deal with when doing fairs that I *know* arena groups don't have to contend with is animals—the four-footed variety, that is. Sometimes, after a show is over and the whole fair has closed for the night, the show animals will be released into the racetrack infield. We didn't know about this practice until one time, after breaking down, I decided to walk across the infield back to where the buses were parked. When I got to the fence at the other side and started to climb over, I turned around and saw that there were a half-dozen horses that had followed me over. I never saw or heard any of them in the dark. Later, I learned that there had also been this bull. We've become a *lot* more aware of things like that now.

RVH: Before going on tour, the band rehearses the show. Does the crew rehearse the setups and breakdowns, and loading up the truck?

CW: The loading arrangement is what we practice more than anything else. When we were in Dallas doing some shows, we talked to some people who work for Showco, the huge touring company. They have little scale models of semis and models of every piece of equipment going out on the road. Their crews don't leave the garage until they can fill those model semis with all the model equipment properly. Unfortunately, it can't work quite so neatly with us because of the shapes and sizes of some of our equipment. Nowadays, they're building sound and lighting equipment more or less to "truck-pack" specifications, designed to be carried in a truck so big and so wide. But stage equipment, drum cases, guitar amp cases, and things like that don't necessarily conform to that formula. We basically figured out our pack two years ago, and it seems to

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work out quite well.

RVH: How long does it take you to get Boo Boo's equipment out of the truck and set up?

CW: That depends on whether or not we have stagehands, which is another thing you run into on the fair circuit. We have a stagehands rider attached to our contract, which in the fair business sometimes is adhered to and sometimes is not. That means that, when you pull up to a stage, you sometimes have five or six stagehands there to help you unload the truck, and other times, you have nobody. Then it's up to the six of us on our crew alone. So the amount of time it takes me to get Boo Boo's drums ready—from the time the truck rolls in to the time I get the kit set up—can be anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours. We've got riser staging to set up as well as the drums. In many cases, we don't have a loading dock; we often have to deal with ramps, some of which are *very* steep. We sometimes have to call for forklifts. Yesterday, we had a really bad problem with a very steep ramp that then led to six or eight stairs that we had to go up. With six- to eight-hundred-pound consoles to lift up, that's damn near impossible. So Ray Tubach, the other drum tech, found a set of old handrailings. We laid them down, put some plywood that we carry over them, and made a ramp out of that. That saved us there. We have to be on-the-spot engineers out here as well.

RVH: Arenas are set up for load-ins and load-outs, with docks, ramps, lifts, etc. But you're dealing with show business in a venue that wasn't designed for it.

CW: Well, they design for it. They just don't *finish* the design. That's the thing about fairs; they just figure, "Well, there's the stage. They can use that. They can get to it." And they're right. It may take a while to get there, but we eventually do.

BM: This stage has probably been here for eight to ten years, and back when it was built, no act was traveling with semis full of equipment. Even today, most of the country acts travel in one or two buses, and carry the equipment underneath the bus. They aren't totally self-contained like what you're seeing here.

CW: As far as country groups who are self-contained go, Lee Greenwood, the Oak Ridge Boys, and Alabama are just about the only ones besides ourselves. Most other acts throw a couple of small amps and a drumkit on stage, and that's it. Of course, their main drawback is that they have to work with whatever sound, monitors, and lights are provided.

RVH: Boo Boo, how do you feel about working this small-town-fair type of circuit, instead of being in a big-city-arena band?

BM: Up until five years ago, if you were a drummer in the country field, you worked for an artist, like Kenny Rogers or Lee Greenwood. That was all there was. And that could really be a pain, because you weren't doing anything for your own career. If that artist got to be big enough, you *might* get some recognition as his or her drummer. Then Alabama broke through, and established a market for country *bands.* With our situation, we're each one-ninth of a whole; we're doing something for ourselves, and that means a whole lot more to me than having to back someone up for the rest of my life. I feel like I'm doing something for my career now.

The show itself is really our only release. A lot of times, people will say something to the effect that we only work an hour and a half a day. That's exactly opposite from the truth. Being out on the road for so long, never getting home and seeing your family—that's work. And there's work involved with just getting along together. Just looking at the band bus, there are nine band members, the road manager, and the driver. That's 11 of us constantly together on one bus for ten and a half months. So we *work* the 22 1/2 hours; the hour and a half we're on stage is the actual reward we get for that. It isn't great fun to stay in a motel somewhere in the Midwest, with no phone or TV. You can't call anybody, and the nearest "town" is a country store five miles from the fairgrounds. Luckily, here in Rutland there's a decent-sized town with a few restaurants and things. But in many cases, the only escape is when you walk up on stage. And if you don't like it, it can really drive you crazy. But everybody in this group does like it 100%. If we didn't, we couldn't be out here.

As we left the crew bus, a light rain was beginning to fall. That rain increased in intensity over the next several hours, making the final setup a cold and soggy affair, and turning the infield into a swamp. Although some consideration was given to canceling the show due to the inclement weather, the decision was made to continue on schedule. A surprisingly large crowd filled the covered area of the grandstand by show time, and Atlanta hit the stage—just as the rain escalated into a serious thunderstorm. Amid jokes about the weather and compliments to the crowd for their durability, the band played a tremendous show (while roadies worked desperately to protect equipment and keep water from building up on the canvas canopy over the stage). After the show, the rain abated enough for the group to come out onto the muddy track and sign autographs for their fans. Then it was back to the hotel for a quick night's sleep, and onto the road again early the next morning for a club engagement in Pennsylvania that night. Rain, mud, horse races, tough traveling—it's all in a summer's work on the fair circuit.

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Calarco continued from page 37

drums always sound terrible to me. Now, we don't do any rock; we don't do any real funk; I'm not doing a commercial gig where I need that "commercial" sound. But I've found—just through my various experiences of playing—that no matter what you play, the best thing to do is just to get the drums to where they sound the best *naturally,* and then leave them alone. I'm very meticulous with what I do. I know how I want to sound, whether it be in a small group or a big band, and I don't really think there's much difference required from the drums between the two gigs. The volume and technical factors, as far as *what* I play, come from me. If I can't play strong enough in the big band and quiet enough behind the quartet, then I shouldn't do both gigs. I don't really change much, other than the bass drum. On all my recordings with either group, I use a 20", but I use a 22" live with the big band because it cuts a little more. I'd rather not have them use mic's, because you're always putting your fate in someone else's hands when you mike too much. For most of the gigs we do, I'd rather go live, and let *me* control the sound. I can play soft, loud, or whatever the need may be. I studied all my life to be a musician, so I should call on those skills. I play the same drums, the same cymbals, and I keep the tuning pretty much the same. I always carry a couple of snare drums with me in case something happens; it's a nightmare when you break a head right in the middle of a tune. I don't have roadies who are going to jump up and change tubs for me; I've got to be equipped to do what I do on myown.

When I do a clinic, I get a lot of questions on equipment. I tell everybody that there's too much unjustified experimenting going on. Now, don't get me wrong; one should never be *afraid* to experiment with sound. But there's too much going on where they can't tell me *why* they tried this or that. I see people who are putting *Pinstripe* heads on because they read about them somewhere or saw someone live doing it. Then they go out and play, and although the drums may sound real good right where they are, when you get ten or 20 feet away, you can't hear them. The head manufacturers will all tell you that the thicker the head, the less projection. Drummers want projection, yet they start doing all this heavy muffling. I think, though, if you look at a lot of name drummers right now, the tendency is getting away from that. They're realizing that the only way they're going to get the sound out there is to take the muffling out. I don't muffle anything. I tell my students and I tell people at clinics: "Learn how to tune the drums properly to get them to where you want them to sound. Get that good, fat, overall sound, and you don't need muffling. You're going to get projection like you won't believe, and you're going to

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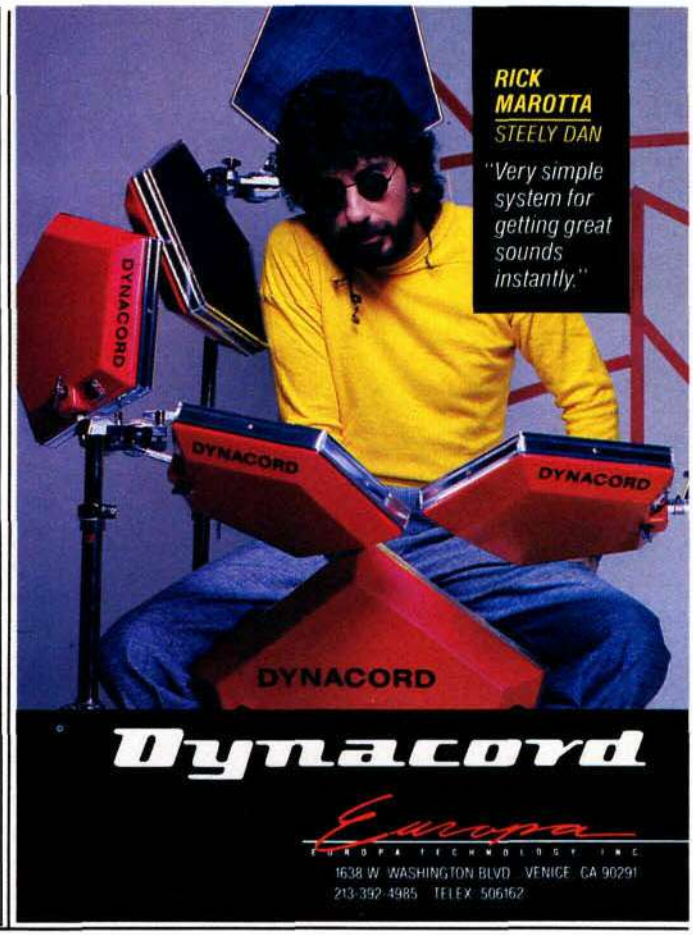

get sound that you can't match." I don't use thick heads; I basically have stayed with coated *Ambassadors* on the tops and clear *Ambassadors* on the bottoms, although for some reason I have a preference for the Ludwig snare side head over the Remo. It gives me what I'm looking for. Sometimes I'll use a little duct tape—very little—to take unwanted ring out of a head that's starting to go. That's it. As for muffling on the snare drum, I only use a little bit, once in a while. I don't like internal mufflers, so I might use an external muffler or a half ring of an old head, about an inch thick. But generally, my drums are wide-open, yet they're not real ringy. The only thing I muffle is the bass drum. I play it double-headed, with clear *Ambassadors* on both sides, and I use felt strips. The key to felt strips is that you have to make them tight on the shell before you put the head on. You can't just lay a felt strip across the drum; you actually have to tape it to the drumshell, so that when you tighten your head up, the felt is tight against the head. That's all I use on my front head. On the batter head, I also use a small piece of foam wedged between one post of my pedal and the head. With this method, I have a 20" bass drum that sounds bigger than any 26" I've ever heard when I need it to, and my 22" has been described by people as a howitzer.

RVH: On Nick Brignola's *Signals* album, your toms sounded very high-pitched—much more so than one would expect on any form of commercial music.

DC: Well remember, that's an acoustic jazz record. The problem is that we're starting to get into this whole area of accepting everything as everything. It's not. My drums certainly are not as high-pitched as Jack DeJohnette's, and my snare is not as high-pitched as Roy Haynes would play. Meanwhile, when you start to listen to things like Peter Erskine, that's not really an acoustic jazz situation. He's still playing creative music, but he's got a more contemporary drum sound for other kinds of things. That really wouldn't work very well in a lot of situations I play. Even if I were to play some cliched bebop lick on a set of drums like that, it wouldn't sound the same; it would sound completely wrong. It's a matter of getting a sound that fits a given situation. Now, I will say one thing: The recording of the album may have a lot to do with the drum sound. You're at the mercy of the equipment, and I don't know an awful lot about that part of it. I try to get the best sound I can from the drums, but I think that engineers have a tendency to make drums that sound like mine sound different when they come out on the record. You wind up thinking it's a much deeper-sounding drum than it is, when really it's all a matter of being EQed and digitally enhanced and all that.

RVH: Perhaps I'm comparing the sound of your drums to what I've heard more in electric jazz, like the latest Steps Ahead album, or Steve Smith with Vital Information.

DC: That's a whole different kind of music. I've caught Steps Ahead live a few times, and I'll be very honest with you: I wasn't knocked out by the drum sound at all. But that's just personal preference. And remember, Peter's got the benefit of a major record label and the amount of money that they're pumping into that album. I don't have the benefits of that whole technological side of recording, so what comes out on our record is just the result of trying to get a good initial drum sound; that's all I can go with. Listen to an album like Steve Smith's recent one, *Orion.* It's great, but on the side that's supposed to be the "small-kit, acoustic group" sound, those drums sound bigger and tubbier than those of most jazz drummers I've ever heard. And when you listen to the other side, which is supposed to be the rock side, I've never heard a drum *in my life* that sounded like that. It's all the studio, and how the drums are miked and processed. There's no drum in the world that we could bring into this room right now that could sound like that.

The sound that I had on the *Signals* album had a lot to do with the drums I was playing at the time. I have since gone through a complete change of equipment and brand—I'm now endorsing Gretsch drums—and for the most part, my sound

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has changed. On the album, I was using a set of five-ply Slingerlands that were real thick. They had a tendency to be very difficult to tune sometimes. In order to get that "singing" sound that I look for, I think I may have had to tighten the toms up a little more than I would have liked. I had a gorgeous snare drum, but in order to make it fit the rest of the drums, I think I had it tweaked up a little more than I would normally.

RVH: I thought I heard two ride cymbals on that record.

DC: Well, I have a Chinese cymbal that I play a lot. It has a couple of rivets in it, and gives a very warm, dark, mellow sound. I don't bash it; I play it with the tip of the stick. I have it positioned pretty low, where I can nail it if I have to, but angled so that I can play it like a ride. So, in a sense, I guess I do have two ride cymbals. My other cymbals, including my ride, are actually positioned a bit higher than the Chinese one. They're all Sabians. I'm endorsing them, and the reason I do is that I wanted to play them after I heard Keith Copeland's set. I play a 22" ride, although I actually didn't want to use one that size. I was working in Maine, and had a day off, so I drove to the Sabian factory in Canada to choose a ride cymbal. I was thinking originally of a 20" ride, but they didn't have anything there that was suitable for my taste. We tried 21" and 19" rides, but nothing sounded right. I was getting discouraged. Then, they suggested that I try some 22" cymbals. We got into a batch of about six 22s, and they all were great. I got it down to a choice between two, and literally had to do an "eenie-meenie-minie-moe" thing to pick one. It's an *HH,* and when listening to it live, that cymbal sounds about as close to the Tony Williams 1964/65 K. Ride sound—the sound he had when he played with Miles—as I can come. The rest of my cymbals include 16" and 18" crashes and standard hi-hats. The Sabian company has been very good to me. You know the way things are in the industry, with the "big-name" thing, but Sabian looks out for the little person as well. That product, as far as I'm concerned, is the best I can possibly get my hands on.

RVH: On the *Signals* album, you are credited with writing "Once Upon A Samba." How did that work out?

DC: I don't consider myself a writer. Henry Mancini, George Gershwin, Harold Arlen, Bill Dobbins [pianist on *Signals]*—they're writers. I consider myself a musician who once in a while gets an idea and likes to give that idea to other musicians to see if it works. I wrote "Once Upon A Samba" around 1977. I had fooled around with it a lot, being influenced by the Chick Corea/RTF samba sound. We actually had been playing it in the group for about two and a half years before the record date came up. At that point Nick said, "I want to record your tune." And that was the

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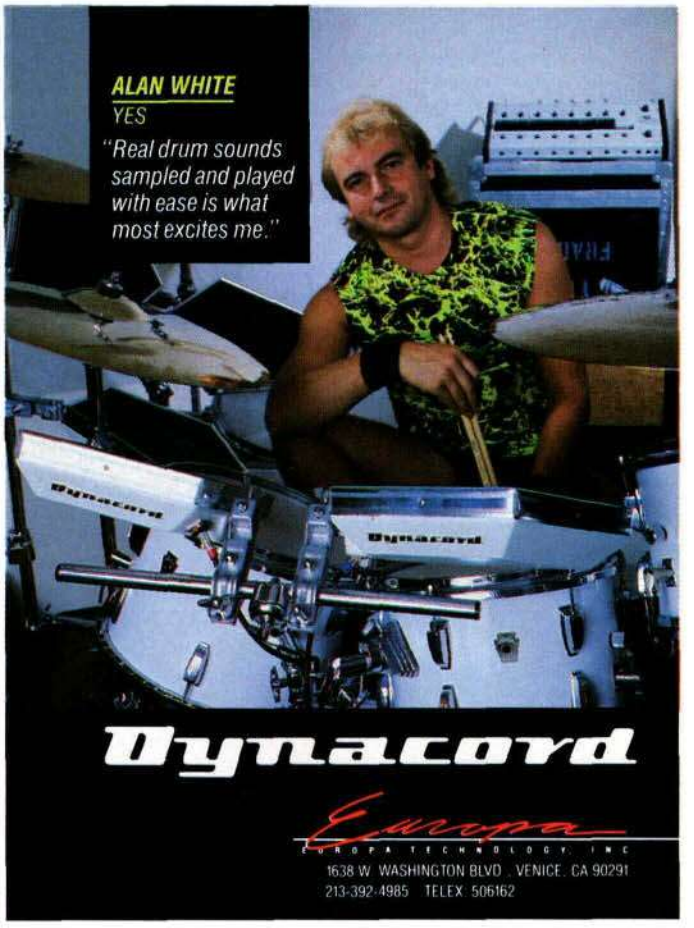


way it was. I wrote a standard lead sheet, and said, "Here's the arrangement I want." We decided on a vamp on the end to let me just play a little something over the end and take it out.

I also wrote a tune for the new album, *Northern Lights,* and brought it in, but after we rehearsed all the tunes down, I decided that I didn't want to record it. Nick wanted to, but I said, "No, I'd rather not. I really prefer the tunes the other guys wrote." And then I kidded Nick by saying, "Besides, I'll get Gerry Mulligan to record it." I've written two more tunes in the past month or so. One is a ballad, one is a Latin thing, and I'm pretty happy with them. I write a lot of ballads, which may be because I don't have to think as a drummer; it's a real form of release for me. I write at the piano; I play enough piano to use it as a writing tool.

RVH: There's another song on *Signals* called "Fun," which just you and Nick play together, and on which you solo. Underneath the playing, I could swear I heard humming.

DC: The Oscar Peterson syndrome! Yes, that's me humming. We recorded that album, and a week later went back to mix. When we did, we realized that we were about five minutes short for the total time we wanted on the album. So now what were we going to do? The other band members had gone home to Boston and Rochester, and there were just the two of us there. When we play in concert, we frequently play duets. Right in the middle of a tune, the other guys will just drop out, and we'll get something going like the old John Coltrane/Elvin Jones thing. So we went back into the studio that day to do a duet. "Fun" was a tune he wrote originally for Dewey Redman and himself to do at a concert as a duet for two saxophones. We had fooled around with it a few times, so I knew the tune. It was a one-take-only situation, with no rehearsal. In this era of everybody being afraid of mistakes, I'm not. I think some mistakes sound really good sometimes. We went in and they turned the tape on, and I started out. Then Nick came in and did his thing, and you can indeed hear me humming. But I don't think it detracts from the piece. I don't hum all the time; I think I was humming then because of the intensity created by the duo thing. I was really thinking melodically of the song—it's a very short, catchy tune—and that just went on the tape.

RVH: You have solo breaks on several of the tunes on *Signals,* as well as virtually all of "Fun." For a small-group situation in which you're not the leader, you play a *lot* of drums on that album. How did that come about?

DC: Well, like I said, I've been a permanent fixture of Nick's group since I started playing with him back in Albany. Many a bass player, guitar player, or pianist has come and gone, but Nick and I are always there. We're like Batman and Robin. I almost resent it, in a certain way, because although it's helped me get a lot of things, I've always been associated with Nick, instead of being judged as an individual. That can hurt you when you're this young and trying to pursue a career in this kind of music. But I do get a lot of solo space when we play live, and on the albums. On that particular one, you'll notice that there are a lot of different types of music. There's a samba, a bebop thing, and the "out" things that Bill Dobbins writes. The title cut has no time signature and no changes; we're just playing a pulse. It just worked out that on "In From Somewhere" Nick wanted me to do a little drum exchange. Great—I'm not about to say no. On my tune, he wasn't about to say no to my little vamp on the end. I take a one-chorus solo on the bebop thing, "Tad's Delight." And then I get the extended thing on "Signals." That's an awful lot of space on one album, but the final say wasn't mine. Nick felt that it fit the album, in the sense that this is what our group is all about. If you read the liner notes, he says, "We're just trying to present some of the different music that you'll hear when you come to hear this group." I get to stretch somewhat live, so he let me do it on the album. Now, on our new album, *Northern Lights,* I don't get as much. I trade some eights with the band on one tune, take two choruses on another, a slight vamp thing on the end of a third, and

that's it.

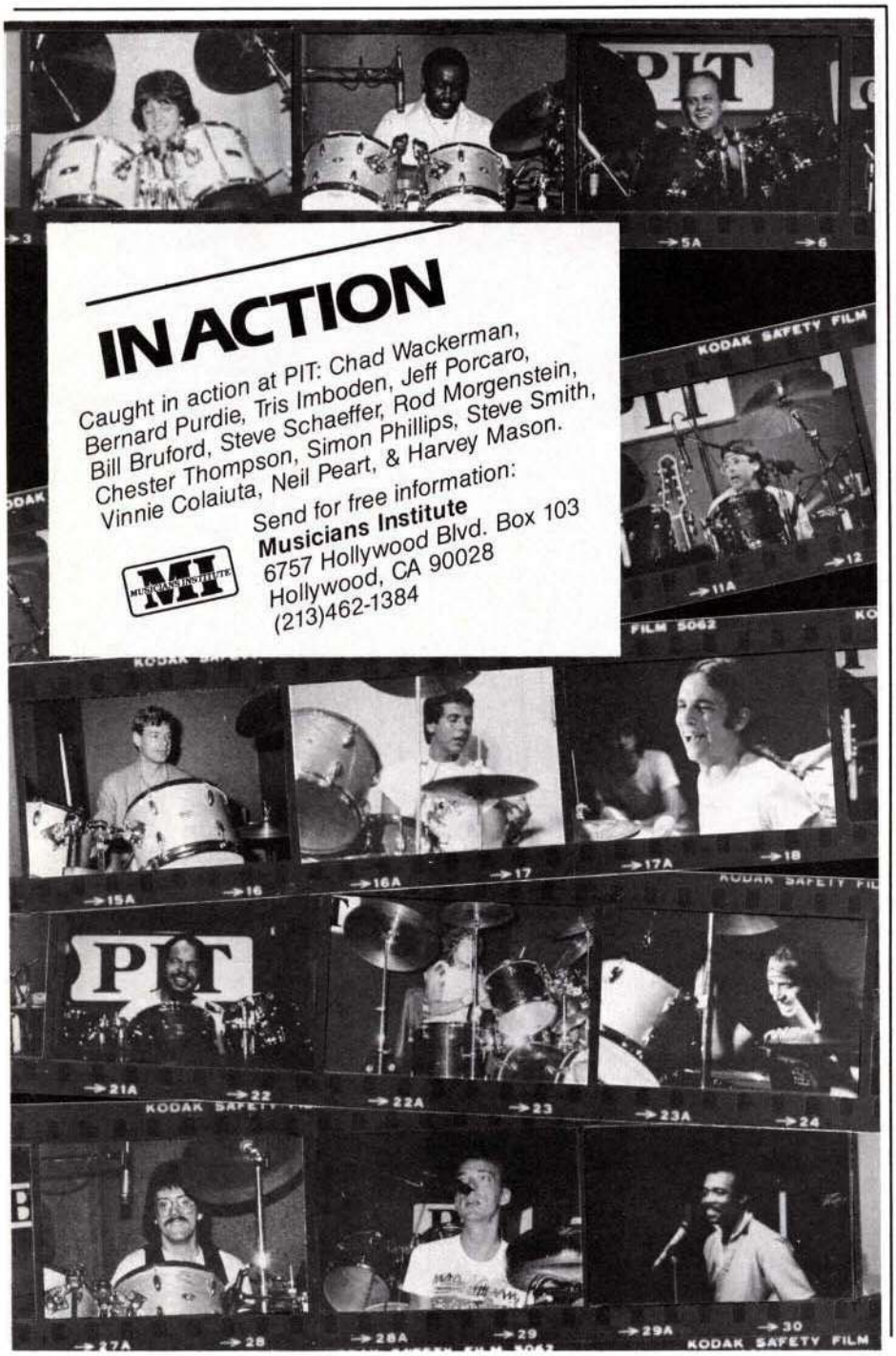
RVH: Even that seems like more feature space than many sidemen would get—especially on drums.

DC: That's because Nick doesn't approach me as a sideman. It's not like he came into town to do an album and said, "Okay, let's call Billy Hart to play drums and so-and-so to play bass . . . ." I'm really a pretty integral part of the sound of his group, and I think he realizes that. He gives me the leeway to stretch out and play. I don't think it sounds the same when he does gigs with other people as when I play with him. There's an attitude and a concept, and part of that stems from a mystique about Upstate New York jazz players—especially Italian Upstate New York jazz players. It's called "The Upstate Burn." There's an intensity there that you just won't find in people from the West Coast. I don't know where it comes from, but everybody I know from Upstate New York who plays acoustic jazz has it. In a sense, Nick is paying me a compliment when he gives me so much playing room, because he's saying, "You're really a more integral part of this sound than a 'sideman.' " I'm perfectly willing to bow out when the need be, but let's face it: I like to *play* drums. I like to play time and I like to solo, and when given the opportunity, I'm ready!

RVH: Have you ever thought about going out on your own as a leader?

DC: Are you kidding? It's hard enough being a sideman. I was just talking on the phone last night to our bass player, John Loughlin, and we agreed that to be a leader on either of our instruments is extremely difficult. If I were a tenor player, I could probably go out, start my own group, and push it. From the drum chair, you've either got to be a drum technician—a person who's there to play all the flash or "drumistics," as I call them—or someone like Art Blakey, who's been around and is himself an establishment. I don't think everybody's a born leader, and let's face it, most drummers are bad leaders. I think you see a tendency for drummers to be leaders now only because it's easy. It's easy for Peter Erskine to be a leader, but to me, he's no leader. I don't mean to offend Peter, because I love his playing; I think he's one of the great players of this particular time. But the album he put out was nothing more than a little bit of altered Steps stuff put out under his name. I don't get the sense of being a *leader* there—not in the sense that Art Blakey is a leader. I mean, with Blakey, that's *his group.* It's the same way that Wynton Marsalis is a leader. As much as Elvin Jones is an individual, I don't get the same feeling from him being a leader as I do from Blakey. Steve Smith, to me, is not a leader. What's he leading? He's got a lot of money, so he can afford to take his own group on the road and get his jollies. That's great, but I don't consider him a leader. Everybody else wrote the tunes on the album—not that they don't with Blakey, but somehow it seems different. It was just a case of "got some bread—put out an album." That's the way this business is. If *you* had $50,000 right now, you could put out an album that would be right up there and would get out just as much as any of those albums. They'd say, "Oh—Rick Van Horn is a new leader." I don't consider myself a leader, because I know how hard it is to do, either from the drums or the bass.

People are going to miss my point, which is that I am interested in the *music;* I want that to be the most important thing. I'm not putting any of the guys I mentioned down; if you do put this in print and it gets to them, I hope they don't take it wrong. I don't mean it negatively; they're great players. I just mean that we're in an age where it's easy to do a lot of different things, and everything is being called "great" nowadays. I knew Steve Smith when we both went to Berklee; Vinnie Colaiuta used to ask me up to his room, and we'd swap stickings. I love the way they play, but to me they're just other good drummers. They're not these gods that the industry has turned them into, and I don't think *everything* they play is that heavy. Put that in. I'm not afraid of offending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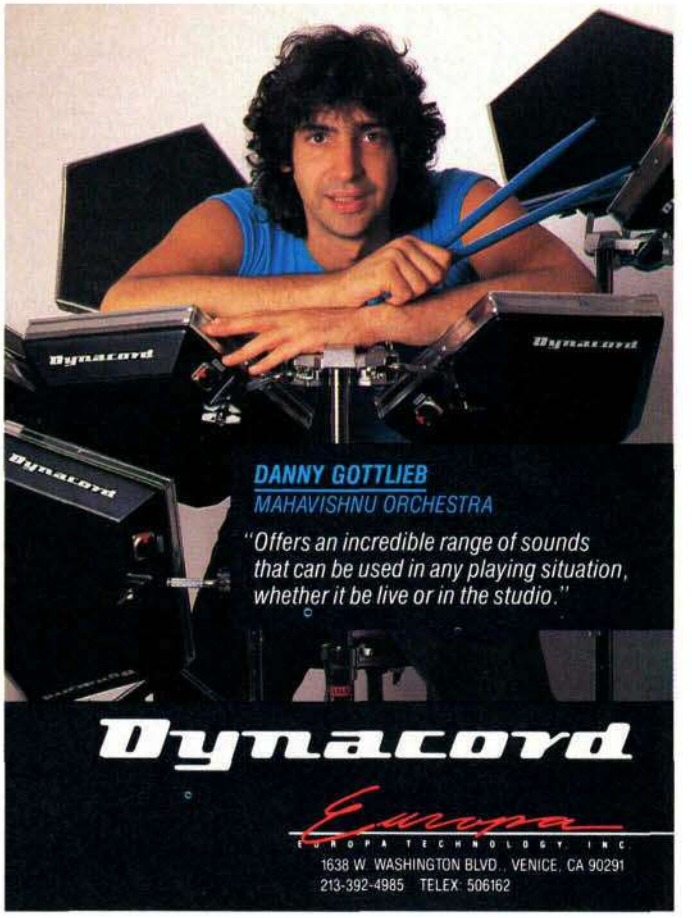
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anybody, because I don't *mean* it in that sense. If they get offended by it, then they obviously have bigger egos than they let on. They've got to understand: I play a kind of music that's not in the limelight; I don't play to crowds of 10,000 people or more all the time. I have; we've been lucky enough to play festivals where we did. But those usually stink, musically. I'd rather play to a little smoke-filled nightclub with 100 people and have them sitting right on top of the drums; I usually play better music. I'm not on the same thinking level as a person who's playing in those larger realms of music. I'm more concerned with the music, and less with the hype and baloney that goes on. I'm not concerned with this contractor or that show. That's great, but I'm talking about music, when we get right down to the bottom line.

I don't know how rock drummers feel, because I don't consider myself a rock drummer, and I don't know how the studio players feel, because I don't really consider myself a studio drummer. I consider myself to be—hopefully—an individual, and to be creative. I'm playing this music called jazz, which is supposed to be both: creative individuality. There's a certain thing inside that sort of dictates to me, and it's taken me a long time to realize that. There are times when I sit and say, "Gee, maybe I did the wrong thing; maybe I should have pursued pop or rock." That's because of the state of the whole jazz situation right now. Let's face it: Music is an industry today, instead of an art form. I'm still trying to deal with it as an art form. It's not that nobody's listening or that nobody wants to listen; it's just that it's difficult, because the outlets for jazz are really not there like they are for other types of music. Don't get me wrong: I'm not saying that it can't be done, but it is that much harder to do. Looking at it in that perspective, I say, "Maybe I should have done something else." But then I always come back to the question: "Could I live with myself?" Of all the experiences I've had, and the different kinds of music I've played, I have to ask myself, "When was I happiest?" I have a saying that I like to use, which is, "When could I go home and sleep?" A lot of nights, after gigs that were so-called prestigious and that paid a lot of money, I would go home and not be able to sleep, because the music wasn't there. My whole concept of playing is that I want to be an individual. I want to play my stuff, even if it stinks. I would rather have you come into a club and say, "Oh, that's David Calarco. I can't stand the way he plays," than to have you come into the club and say, "Yeah—sounds okay, man. Who's the drummer?" There are enough *good drummers* around the world, man. There are thousands of people who sound good, but very few individuals.

It took me the longest time—I know I sound like an old man here at 29 years old—but it took me until now to realize that the only person I have to please is myself. And this came about through my work with Nick Brignola and other great musicians who kind of fed me little things here and there, and told me how it really was. I was in a hurry to succeed, and that can put you into a situation where you want a gig so badly, and you wonder so much about what the leader is thinking, and you try so hard to *play the gig,* that you wind up not playing *you!* You wind up trying to please everybody, and you don't please *anybody,* least of all yourself. If you came up to me and said, "Gee Dave, I thought you sounded great tonight," and meanwhile I felt terrible about the way I played, does it really matter what you said? I appreciate the compliment, but I'm still going to walk away not feeling good about what I did. On the other hand, if you don't say anything, but I feel good about what I played, that's it: I feel good. Some of the hippest stuff I've ever played went unnoticed by anyone but me. That's when you realize that, if you're happy and you enjoy what you do, that's the most important thing. If you're an individual, somewhere along the line that's bound to get out, and somebody's going to listen and take hold of it. In this era of stock drummers and sound-alikes, that's the *last* thing I want to be. That's kind of a diehard statement, but there's a lot to be said for people who want to hang in there.

by Rick Van Horn

On The Rise: Part 2

Last time, we discussed potential commercial sources for obtaining drum risers, or for having them constructed. But while buying a stock or custom-made riser is convenient, it is also very expensive, and in some cases may be limited by what is available for sale. This time, we're going to discuss the other alternative: building your own riser. I'm going to give you some suggestions, and provide you with a few diagrams to get you started towards your own design.

Let me stress that not every drum riser needs to be a massive piece of engineering; it just needs to be some sort of construction strong enough to support you and your set safely. Nor does a riser necessarily have to look like something off of a concert stage. To me, a drum riser is a functional item. It's a piece of equipment designed to serve one purpose only: to make you more visible when you are drumming. To that end, I feel that the riser itself should be as inconspicuous as possible. Of course, if you wish to have the riser cosmetically consistent with other elements of your band's stage setup, that is another option. But don't feel as if you have to create a work of art. This is a club setup, not grand opera.

In a previous column ("The Visual Element," Nov. '84), I mentioned two riser designs created by drummers I've known. One was simply a sheet of plywood supported on concrete blocks; the other was two shallow wooden boxes inverted over plastic milk crates. Both designs were very rudimental and not particularly aesthetic, but they both worked just fine and suited their drummers' purposes satisfactorily. I mention them again to illustrate how a little creativity—and a practical outlook—can allow you to obtain what you need in a riser with little or no investment or construction effort.

Riser Designs

For those of you who have the skill, the access to tools, and most of all, the inclination to take on a serious construction project in order to create a custom riser, I'm going to present two design ideas in this column, and one more next time. I can't take credit for the first one, however. Back in the April '81 issue of *MD,* Vince Gutman offered a design for a pair of flight cases that opened up and combined to create a portable stage for a small kit. Vince's design could conceivably be adapted to accommodate larger kits as well, since such kits would require more cases anyway. I suggest that you check out this article (which is also included in the *MD Treasury).*

The first of my two designs (and the one we'll discuss this time) is the most basic: a simple, solid-construction box. This unit is relatively easy and inexpensive to build, but has the drawback of being heavy and not collapsible. You'll need to figure out how you'll transport it *before* you start to build it. The second design is for a type of riser I mentioned in my last column: a theatrical collapsing platform called a "parallel." It's a bit more complicated to build, but has several advantages over the box type. We'll go into its design next month.

As a general introduction to my riser designs, let me say that I've figured a 6' x 6' X 12" riser as a standard, useful size in most club applications. Of course, you'll need to measure the floor space your kit takes up and adjust your design accordingly. But you'd have to play fairly large club stages regularly in order to be able to use anything much bigger than 6' x 6'. Although that size may sound small initially, if you tapeouta6' x 6' area on your floor, you'd be surprised at how large it really is, and how much equipment you can fit onto it. (My own riser is 5 1/2' x 5 1/2'.) I chose 12" as the height, because that height works well for most of the club stages I work on. (An 18" height might be an option, but I wouldn't go higher, since many club stages are tucked into low-ceilinged alcoves and similar tight spots. You don't want to risk a skull fracture every time you step up onto the riser.)

As a last introductory word, let me urge you not to attempt any of the construction suggested in this article, unless you are thoroughly skilled at basic carpentry and the use of the tools necessary to do the work. If you aren't, enlist the aid of someone who is. Besides the obvious safety factor, you're going to be making a significant investment in time and materials. You may also need to adapt my designs to suit your own purposes. I want you to be able to obtain satisfactory results without having to start over again several times. That can get frustrating—to say nothing of getting expensive!

Building A Box Riser

Materials required:

1. 3/4" *plywood.* The design uses two and a half 4' x 8' sheets of plywood sanded on one side. It may be possible to actually purchase only two and a half sheets, by paying the lumberyard a small fee to cut a sheet in half for you. (You want it cut *lengthwise,* giving you a sheet 2' x 8'.) The cutting charge should be much less than the charge for the unused portion of a full sheet. If the lumberyard cannot do this, you'll need to buy three full sheets. How you cut these sheets into your component parts will be outlined later.
2. *1 x 3 pine battens.* You'll need some 1 x 3 boards to create the corner blocks and braces in your riser. The dimensions on the design are based on 1 x 3 that is milled to an *actual size* of 3/4" x 2 5/8", which is standard in most areas. *Be sure to* check with your lumber supplier on the actual size of the lumber you are buying, so that you can adjust the dimensions on the design as necessary. Since you want wood that is straight and free of knots, I suggest buying "clear pine." It's more expensive than some other types of batten stock, but in the long run the investment should be worthwhile. You'll need a total of 14' of batten length. Since you'll be cutting the board into individual pieces just under 1' long each, any combination of board lengths adding up to 14' will do. In other words, you could buy one 14' batten, two 7' battens, one 6' and one 8', etc. The precise cuts will be explained later.
3. *Nails.* You'll need a generous supply of 4d ("four penny") and 6d ("six penny") box nails. (As an option, for extra strength, you might consider using wood screws.)
4. *Glue.* Get a quart of *Elmer's Woodworker's Glue* or its equivalent. This is similar in consistency to the familiar "white glue," but contains resins to make it stronger for woodworking applications.

Tools required:

1. Saw. This is the most important tool for this job. A table saw (to cut the plywood) and a radial arm saw (to cut the pine boards) would be preferable, because they can generally provide the most accurate cuts. Failing those, a portable circular saw (such as a *Skil* saw) can do the job. A handsaw (crosscut) will also do the job, but the work will be tedious, and you'll have to be extra careful to keep your cuts straight.
2. *Carpenter's square.* This is to ensure square corners and tight joints.
3. *Tape Measure.* You'll need this to measure your cuts.
4. *Hammer.*
5. *Screwdriver.* (Only if you've decided to use screws.)
6. *Backstop.* If you're working alone,

Diagram A: Long End Board

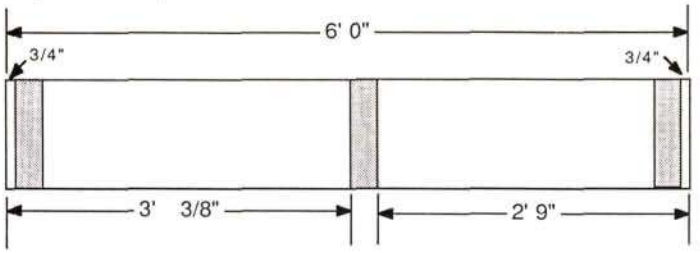


Diagram B: Short End Board

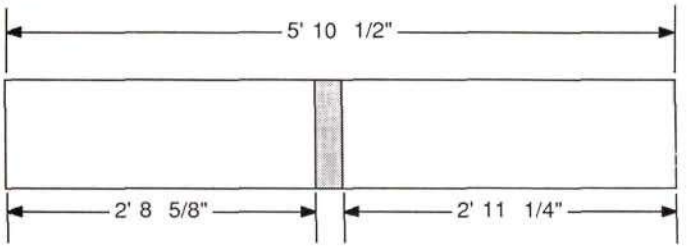


Diagram C: Long Center Board

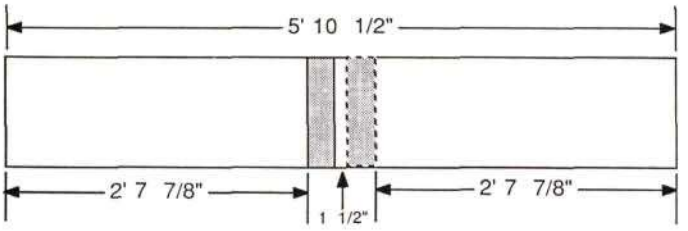
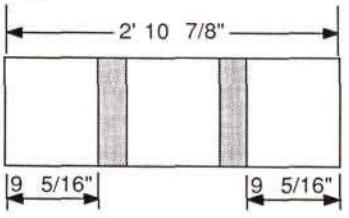
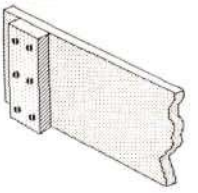


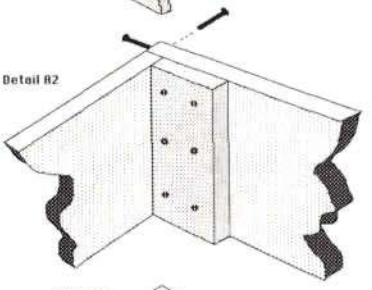
Diagram D: Short Center Board



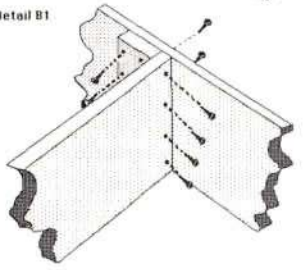
Detail A1



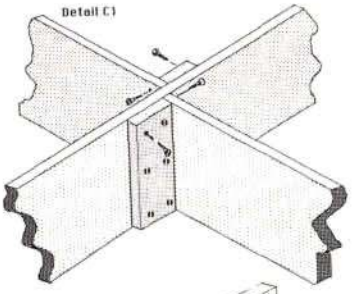
Detail A2



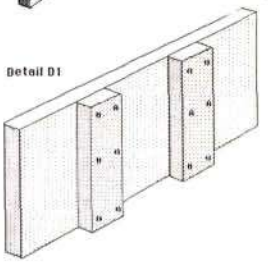
Detail B1

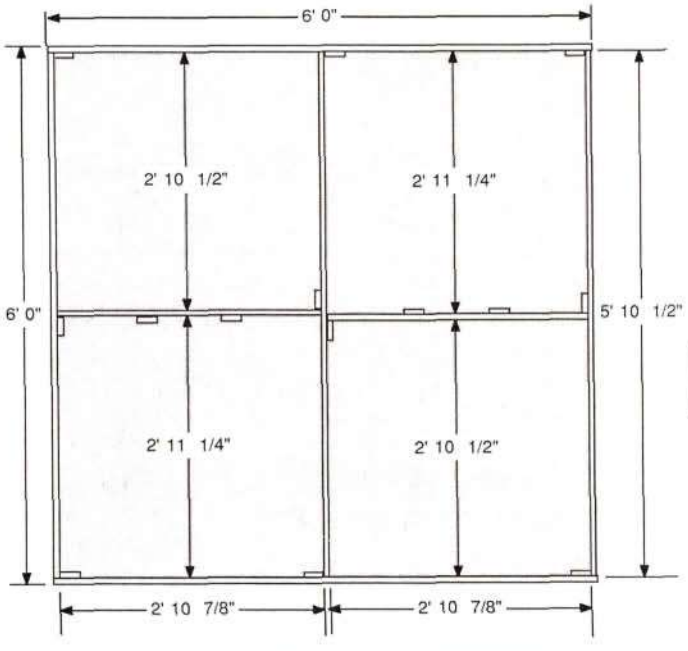


Detail C1

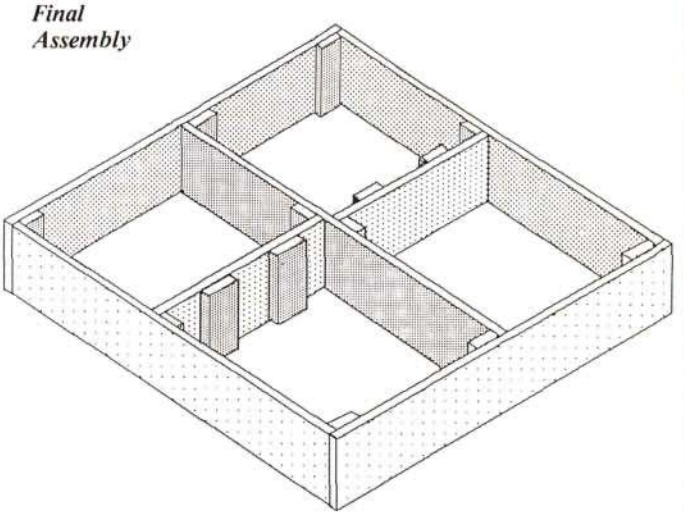


Detail D1





Final Assembly



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you'll need something to back the other end of the board you're hammering against. A concrete wall or curb is good; don't use a plaster wall or siding that might be dented or damaged by the impact.

Cuts: (Remember that a saw blade has width; always allow for that width when making your measurements, so that you end up with a piece that has the dimensions you want.)

1. *Plywood.* Cut the first sheet into one 3' x 6' piece and two 1 1/4" x 6' pieces. Cut the second sheet into one 3' x 6' piece and two 11 1/4" x 5' 10 1/2" pieces. Cut the third sheet (or half-sheet) into one 11 1/4 x 5' 10 1/2" piece and two 11 1/4" x 2' 10 7/8" pieces.
2. *Pine board.* Cut the batten stock into 14 pieces 11 1/4" long. These are your corner blocks and braces.

Assembly:

1. Starting with a 6' long side, and following the dimensions given in Diagram A, attach corner blocks and braces where indicated, using both glue and 4d nails. Follow the nail pattern shown in Detail Diagram A1, and nail *through* the corner block *into* the side piece. Use your carpenter's square to ensure that the boards are mounted absolutely vertically (square). Also, be sure to attach the blocks to the rough side of the plywood, so that the smooth side faces out. If possible, for this and all assembly operations involving corner blocks or center braces, you should clamp or weight the blocks while the glue is drying, to maximize the strength of the bond. Duplicate this operation for the other 6' side piece.
2. Following the dimensions given in Diagram B, attach a center brace to each of *two 5'* 10 1/2" pieces.
3. Following the dimensions given in Diagram C, attach the two center braces (one on each side) to the 5' 10 1/2" piece that will be the center board of the riser. (See also Detail Diagram C1.)
4. Attach two center braces to each of the two 11 1/4" x 2' 10 7/8" short crosspieces. The braces should be mounted on each board as shown in Diagram D and Detail Diagram D1.
5. Using a backstop, begin to assemble the riser by nailing *through* one 6' side board *into* the ends of the two outer and one center 5' 10 1/2" pieces, using 6d nails and glue. Then nail through *those* pieces into the adjacent corner blocks and braces, as shown in Detail Diagram A2, again using 6d nails and glue.
6. Turn the riser around, and repeat step 5 using the remaining 6' side.
7. Install the two shorter crosspieces, nailing *through* the riser sides *into* the ends of the crosspieces, and *through* the crosspieces *into* the corner blocks and braces. (See Detail Diagram B1.)
8. Lay one 3' x 6' sheet of plywood over the riser frame so that it runs parallel to the 6' side piece and the sanded side is up. Note on the top where the ends of the vertical center braces (attached to the short crosspieces and on which the top will rest) meet the top, so that you can nail into them. Then nail the top down to all edges and crosspieces using 6d nails and glue. Repeat this step for the other half of the top. The box riser is now completed, and may be painted, covered with a rug, or finished in any other way you desire. You may find it convenient either to attach handles or to cut hand-holes in the sides, to make carrying the riser a bit easier.

Before you launch into the construction of a box-type riser, I suggest you wait until next month's issue and examine the parallel type. Then you can decide which design best suits your particular riser needs.

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For more information on the SM98, write or call Shure Brothers Inc., 222 Hartrey Avenue, Evanston, IL 60202-3696. (312) 866-2553.

Electronic

Pearl Drum-X

The Pearl *Drum-X* is a five-piece programmable analog kit, capable of storing eight different drumkits in memory. The setup consists of four, small, octagonal pads measuring approximately 3" deep by 13" in diameter, and a bass drum pad which is 24" high, 19" wide, and 4" deep.

The playing surfaces of the snare/tom pads use a round double layer of rubber for a natural feel and decreased "impact shock." In the center of the bass pad is a circular rubber disc, surrounded by a chrome ring. This impact area "gives" a little when struck, approximating the feel of a real bass drum. There is a large steel plate at the bottom of the pad for pedal mounting. Two large tubular leg spurs fit into external clamp brackets on the sides of the bass drum pad. These legs are capped at one end, and have a small spike point on the other. The snare/tom pads accept Pearl's 7/8" tom-tom arms, and have provisions for the *Vari-Set* memory locks. A large T-screw beneath the pads secures them to their holder arms. All the pads have 1/4" input jacks.

The *Drum-X* brain is rack-mountable, and is equipped with a variety of digital and LED readouts. A large window on the face of the unit gives valuable programming information, such as kit number (1 through 8), parameter (marked with LEDs), selected pad (also with LEDs), and parameter value. Other LEDs are used to designate memory protection status, as well as trigger/sensitivity level. Sensitivity level is adjusted via a small rotary knob for each pad. Two other knobs control line-in level (from tapes or records) and headphone volume. There is no output volume control; output volume must be controlled at your mixing board.

Pearl uses a "step" system of programming on the *Drum-X.* The variables are pad select, parameter select, parameter value, and kit select—all done with push buttons, not the usual sliders or dials. The kit select section has eight buttons for instant call-up of any desired kit to program or play. Your selected kit reads out digitally. The other three sections have two push buttons each, with arrows marking up-down or left-right. The pad select push buttons allow you to choose which pad you wish to program. One button moves the window LED to the left; the other moves it to the right—simple enough. The parameter select buttons move the LED in that section across the eight programmable variables: pitch, bend, oscillator/noise balance, overtone, attack, filter, decay, and level. The parameter value buttons step from 0 through 19, giving 20 different levels of adjustment for each parameter. The value number you choose is read out digitally. My one complaint is that there is no lighting for the window itself, and therefore, all titles are difficult to read, espedaily in low-light situations. I have been told, however, that Pearl plans to correct this in the near future.

User-programming of the *Drum-X* is extremely easy to accomplish; it's simply a matter of pressing buttons and using your ears to arrive at the sound colors you want. Once you have made your programming decisions, a switch on the back of the brain allows you to protect all eight kits, kits 1 through 7 only, or none of them (in case you want to alter them further while playing). It should be mentioned that kits 1 through 7 are preprogrammed factory kits, but these may be modified if you so desire. The memory protect switch is very important on the *Drum-X,* because it gives you the option to either keep the kits you have or reprogram them.

The rear of the unit has 1/4" stereo line-in jacks and mono/stereo line-out jacks, as well as separate pad inputs and outputs, should you want to give a mixer channel to each one. There are also two "mystery" jacks. I say "mystery," because the equipment and/or instructions are not available yet to operate these functions. The external trigger pin jack will trigger the pads from drum machines, sequencers, etc., and the kit select pin jack is for footswitch selection of kits 1 through 8. All pad cables are included with the *Drum-X* package, as well as one output cable.

Also available optionally is the *TUR-1 Rack* mounting stand for the *Drum-X* brain. It is built of black steel, and has a single fold-down shelf to place the brain onto. (Strangely, there are no holes in the frame to screw-mount the *Drum-X* brain permanently via its rack ears.) Special stand/pedal packages are available as well. The *Drum-X* retails at $1,299 without hardware, and as far as I can tell, only comes in black. There is also a "basic" *Drum-X* for $999, which has two tom pads, the brain, and three cables. This, of course, may be added on to later.

Pearl's *Drum-X* is a great deal more professional than the *Fightman* (reviewed *MD:* Apr. '85). The unit is capable of some really good sounds, both Simmons-type and acoustic. I especially liked the factory's "Bill Bruford kit"! Programming is simple and quick, making the *Drum-X* a heavy challenger in the ever-widening electronic drumkit battle.

by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.

Drums: Part 5

Roland DDR-30 Digital Drums

Roland has entered the electronic drum market with its *DDR-30 Digital Drums.* All the sounds are digitally generated by a rack-mountable brain. Roland's drumpads have six-sided triangular shapes, with silver shells. The playing surfaces are constructed of particle board, then rubber, and then a black top film. I quickly got accustomed to the feel of the pads, as they are not all that unnatural. The pads' acoustic sound is somewhat subdued; stick sound is kept to a minimum.

The *PD-10* bass drum pad has two large side-mounted spur legs with pointed tips. It also has a pedal mounting plate with two sprung spur points. The bass drum pad has a circular strike area in its center, while the small *PD-20* pads have full playing surfaces. All pads have both XLR and 1/4" jacks. The *PD-20* pads are equipped with brackets to mount them onto L-arm holders (or they can mount on snare stands).

The *DDR-30* brain has six voices: bass, snare, and four toms. Each voice has four PCM digital sounds, and each voice may be modified in eight different "patches." The brain can hold eight complete drumkits in four separate banks, yielding a total of 32 possible drumkit combinations. An optional load/dump memory cartridge can expand this capability to 96.

The *DDR-30* comes with all kits as factory presets. However, these may all be user-modified over 16 parameters per voice. A large window on the face of the brain displays important program/modification information for bank number, kit number, voice name, patch number, parameter name, and parameter value. Various push-button switches operate the different functions, which are: Edit, Write, Patch Write, Bank Select, Kit Select, Voice Select, and Program Number. The modifier section has buttons for Edit Forward and Backward (step to specific parameter), Voice, Gate, Pitch, EQ, Sensitivity, Copy, Cartridge, and MIDI. There is also a slot for the optional memory data cartridge, plus a MIDI Message LED.

A large rotary wheel (called the *Alpha Dial)* allows variable degrees of "parameterization" when modifying the preset sounds. The 16 parameters of each voice are arranged into four groups, and most use step numbers to vary their modification values. The editable parameters of the VOICE section are: Source Number (one of four digital sounds), Level (0-99), Decay (1-99), Attack (0-99), and Attack Decay (1-99). The PITCH section variables are: Pitch (two-octave range), Bend Depth (0-99), Bend Decay (1-99), and Dynamics Sensitivity (0-99). The GATE section varies the sudden "cut" of a sound using Gate Level 1 & 2 (0-99), Gate Release 1 & 2 (1-99), and Gate Time (0-99). The EQ section can adjust treble and bass frequencies. The *Alpha Dial* is designed to be continuously rotatable. When you reach the peak adjustment of 99, the dial still turns, but the number stops. It might be easier if Roland could arrange for it to recycle, starting at 0 again, rather than having to turn the dial all the way back to get to your initial starting point.

After you've made the modifications you deem necessary, you may either write the individual modifications into memory, or assemble them into drumkits and write *them* into memory. The *DDR-30* also has a Copy function to copy a specific sound into a different memory area, thus saving you time if you want to use a certain sound in different kits. All the factory presets can be recalled at the push of a button or two, but all the *kits you* have developed will be erased. So it's a good idea to save yours on cartridges—just in case. Understanding all the various functions is a bit complicated at first, but a reading of the well-written owner's manual will thoroughly explain everything. All operations are quite simple, once you know how.

The rear of the *DDR-30* brain has XLR jacks for each pad input, 1/4" jacks for separate pad outputs to your mixer, plus 1/4" jacks for left and right mix out. (It can also output in mono.) Three MIDI jacks are included, as this unit is MIDI-compatible all the way. Optional remote pedal switches are available for kit select and bank select, and of course, the brain has jacks for these. The *DDR-30* comes with two output cables, but for some reason, Roland does not include the XLR cables needed for the pads. Stands are also not included, but any L-arm type holder system will accommodate the small pads.

Roland's *DDR-30* setup has a very modern look, and the sounds are superb. From acoustic drums to Simmons-type, from Latin drums to timpani, they are all clean, realistic digital sounds. (The timpani presets are the best I've heard!) The pads are very responsive—they will easily read a buzz roll—and dynamic sensitivity is very good. I have no complaints with the *DDR-30* system, and in fact, I am quite impressed with its sounds and capabilities.

The system is marketed in modular form, meaning that you can build up your setup whenever you desire. The *DDR-30* brain retails at $1,195. The *PD-10* bass drum pad is $195; the small *PD-20* pads are $99 each. A five-piece setup retails for a reasonable $1,796.

JTG Drum-FX2

JTG has recently introduced a single, self-contained electronic drumpad with interchangeable sound chips, like the Simmons *SDS1.* The *Drum-FX2* uses 8-bit "compandable" ROM chips in 64K and 128K. The "compandable" format means decreased background noise during sound decay, unlike linear chips, which have a higher noise content. JTG currently offers 55 different digital ROM chips.

The unit is a round rubber-surfaced pad, with a 14" diameter. All controls for the unit are mounted in line with the pad at its bottom. Rubber stripping surrounds the pad's edges. The feel is much like a rubber practice pad, with good response and rebound.

Controls for the *Drum-FX2* are: volume/power, dynamic sensitivity, pitch sensitivity, decay, sweep (two waveforms),

low EQ, high EQ, and pitch, which also has a high/low selector switch for quick changes. There is a trigger LED plus a select switch for 64K or 128K chips. The single ROM chip mounts in a Z1F (Zero Insertion Force) socket on the control panel. This socket is not covered, and I feel that JTG should incorporate some sort of protection for the chip in case of unplanned stick attacks. On the same note, the controls themselves are in a rather bad spot, being at the front of the pad surface—again, liable to be struck by an on-the-loose drumstick. I'm told that JTG plans to market a template to fit over the control dials with the names printed upside down, so the pad may be mounted with controls above the pad.

Beneath the control panel is a 1/4" output jack, a mix input jack to use with keyboards, drum machines, etc., an external input jack to pulse-trigger the unit from another source, and power in and out jacks. The *Drum-FX2* can be battery- or AC-powered. With the proper AC pack, up to five pads can be driven simultaneously by linking them together. The unit will mount on a tubular-style holder arm on either side, as there is a key rod-set inner clamp on the left and right sides of the pad.

I had the chance to listen to a good selection of JTG's digital chips, and they are right on the money. The cymbals may cut out a little too quickly, but the drum and effects sounds are very clear and realistic. (And why shouldn't they be? They're real sounds blown into ROM!) Each sound chip needs some modification via the control dials to get the ideal sound you want, but the ranges are quite wide. JTG's 64K chips list at $22.95; the 128Ks list at $34.95. The *Drum-FX2* seems to be a good competitor for the *SDS1 (MD:* Nov. '85) at $269.00 retail.

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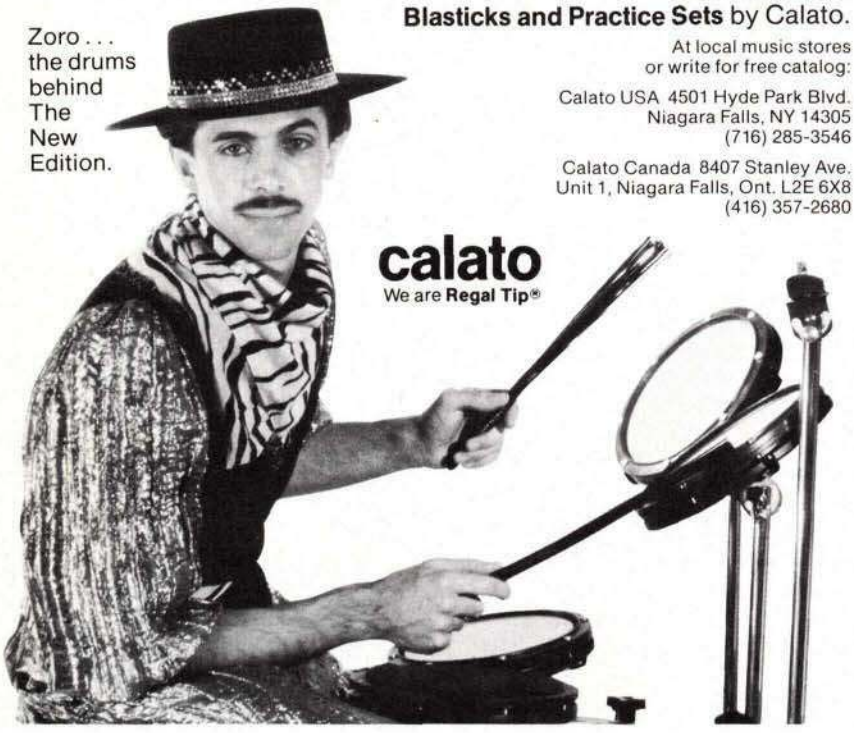

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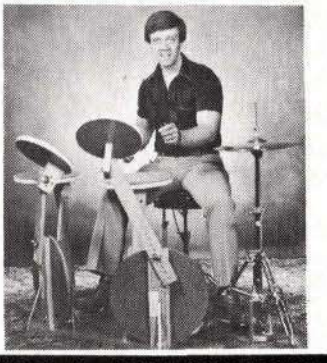

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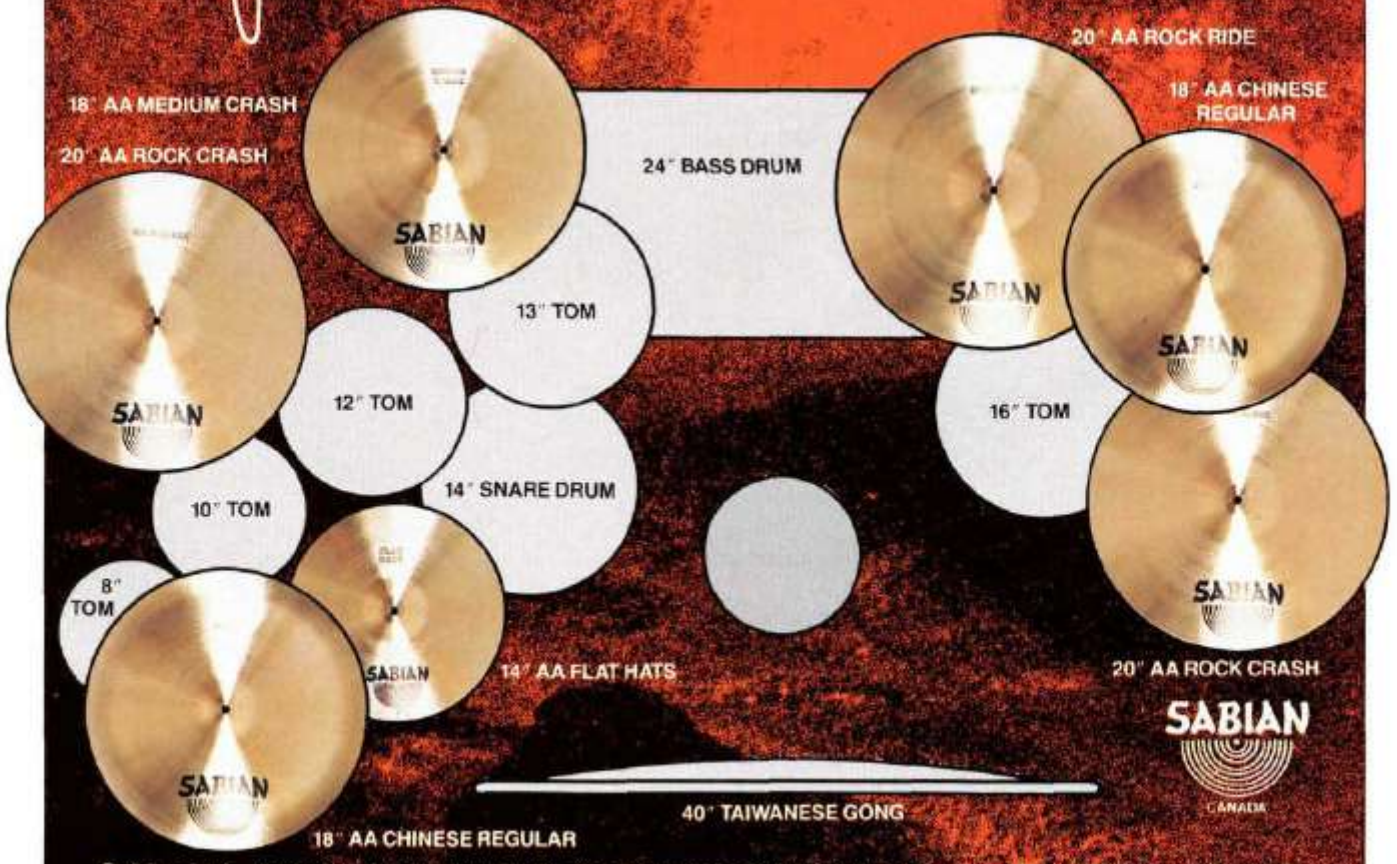

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Hear Dio on their new album — Sacred Heart. See them on their Sacred Heart Tour.

INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

BERRY ENDORSES MEINL

On R.E.M.'s European tour, drummer Bill Berry had a chance to visit the Meinl Cymbal Company in Germany. Already an endorser for Meinl's *Profile* cymbals, Bill was very pleased with some cymbals out of the new *Raker* line. He picked up a *Raker* heavy hi-hat to replace his *Profile Hi-Tech* hi-hat, a *Raker* 18" heavy crash, and a *Raker* 10" splash.

RICHARDS JOINS SABIAN/ALDEN

Sabian/Alden now has an experienced sales supervisor in Michigan and the Ohio Valley. He is Mark Richards., a fine drummer whose early career included ten years in both sales and marketing with Gretsch. Mark's new responsibilities with Sabian/Alden include artist relations and dealer support for the entire Sabian/Alden product line featuring Sabian Cymbals, Sonor Percussion, and many more products. According to Dave McAllister of Sabian/Alden, "Mark is a talented and competent young man who is a strong addition to the growing Sabian/Alden team. Drummers and dealers throughout Michigan and the Ohio Valley are invited to call on Mark for help and guidance with any Sabian/Alden product. He may easily be reached at 1276 Butcher Road, Fenton, Michigan 48430, or by calling (313)750-0611."

4TH INTERNATIONAL DRUMMERS MEETING

The 4th International Drummers Meeting, sponsored by ProSound Music Stores of Germany, will be held in late February—on the weekend following the Frankfurt Music Fair. Former meetings featured clinics and seminars by such artists as Louie Bellson, Harvey Mason, Alex Acuna, Rick Latham, Billy Cobham, Simon Phillips, Bill Bruford, Graham Lear, Gerry Brown, Pete York, Steve Smith, Willie Wilcox, and Roy Burns. Each event has been attended by 1,000 to 1,500 drummers from all over Europe. Juergen Mader, one of the event's organizers, was recently in the U.S. at the Percussive Arts Society annual convention in an effort to contact other notable drummers for possible participation in this year's show. High on his list were Tony Williams, Vinnie Colaiuta, Jim Chapin, Chester Thompson, Stewart Copeland, and Terry Bozzio. For further information, contact ProSound, D5400 Koblenz, W. Germany.

TORPEY AND SIMON NEW PRO-MARK ENDORSERS

The Pro-Mark Corporation recently announced the addition of two new artists to its endorser roster. Pat Torpey, currently on tour with John Parr (best known for his hit with the title theme from *St. Elmo's Fire),* has also performed on the soundtrack of *The Karate Kid* and is featured in Melissa Manchester's recent video, "Energy." He also has numerous TV appearances to his credit.

Mark Simon is the drummer for the popular British band Grim Reaper, who recently toured the U.S. in support of their album *Fear No Evil.* He received his formal musical training in and around Birmingham, England, and joined Grim Reaper in early 1985.

Pat Brown, spokesman for Pro-Mark, said, "We are very happy to have both Pat and Mark in the Pro-Mark family. Both are excellent, professional players, and we look forward to a long and successful relationship with them."

JOSHUA PEDEN ON SIMMONS DRUMS

Joshua Peden, the extraordinary eight-year-old drummer who stole the show in Don Henley's "Boys of Summer" video, is now a Simmons Electronic Drum Artist. A native Californian, Joshua began drumming at age two on pots and pans. He quickly graduated to a full-sized set of acoustic drums, his interest eventually growing to include electronic drums as well. Through regular lessons with such noted LA drum instructors as Murray Spivak, Wally Snow, Sandy Nelson, and Joe Porcaro, Josh's youthful enthusiasm continued to mature. His dedicated, dynamic drumming was brought to the attention of Simmons Drums, and through Simmons' recently established "Young Artist Program," he is now playing a set of Simmons *SDS8* electronic drums.

"At Simmons, we are committed to encouraging and supporting the future of music," said Simmons Artist Services director, Dave Levine. "Joshua Peden is one of the reasons that the future looks so bright. While he is typical of the many young people who are once again becoming excited about playing the drums, Josh is also a very special, tremendously talented individual. Simmons is pleased to be associated with a member of a whole new generation of up-and-coming drummers." Simmons will feature Josh as a spokesman in print and video ads in the near future, as well as at trade shows and in-store promotions.

For further information on Joshua Peden's availability, or on the Simmons "Young Artist Program," please contact Simmons Electronic Drums at 23917 Craftsman Road, Calabasas, California 91302, (818) 884-2653.

DRUMMERS COLLECTIVE UPDATE

In keeping with its policy of offering innovative programs and classes, Drummers Collective recently held a four-week Studio Drumming Workshop, which was conducted by Chris Parker. Students got a chance to use some of Chris' actual charts from jingle and record dates. For one class, everyone sat in on a session that Chris was doing. Each student had his or her own set of headphones and was able to listen in on the cue mix. Another special series was conducted in the month of December by Sandy Gennaro and Michael Shrieve, who led weekly sessions dealing with contemporary rock drumming, including both acoustic and electronic playing applications.

Jaco Pastorius has joined the Drummers Collective staff and is currently accepting private students there. Aside from his load of bass students, drummers have also begun studying with him. This has proven very valuable, as it gives each drummer a chance to work with one of the world's great bassists—who is himself a fine drummer. For more information on this and other classes, contact Drummers Collective, 541 Avenue Of The Americas, New York, NY 10011, or phone (212)741-0091.

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ZILDJIAN Z-SERIES CYMBALS

The Avedis Zildjian Company recently announced the introduction of Z-Series, a totally new cymbal produced using the centuries-old Zildjian family secret casting and alloying process, but shaped by computerized hammers and not lathed. This new process gives them a distinctive sound, a striking appearance and unsurpassed tensile strength, according to the company.

To give the Zildjian bronze alloy a new voice suited to today's electronically oriented, rhythmically precise musical environment, the Zildjian Sound Lab used science to advance the art of cymbal-making. A computer-controlled hammering process gives Z-Series cymbals their unique sound and look. The pattern, spacing, and thrust tonnage of the hammers are all stored in digital memory, and can be repeated with a degree of precision never before possible. Even the shapes of the hammers themselves have been changed. Convex Closed Hex, concave Open Penta, concave Five Point Star, and convex Six Point Star hammers are all used to shape the sound of different types of Z-Series cymbals. Power Crashes, Power Rides, Power Smashes, and hi-hats are available in a variety of sizes and weights. For further information, contact The Avedis Zildjian Company, Longwater Drive, Norwell, Massachusetts 02061.

DYNACORD DUOPAD

The new Dynacord *Duopad* offers two completely independent sensors—one on the surface and one on the rim—which drive separate output jacks. Accordingly, two different sounds can be generated with the *Duopad* (e.g., snare on the pad surface and rimshot on the rim). In order to heighten that snare feeling even further, the *Duopad* is equipped with a special transition control, with which the coupling between the two sounds can be infinitely adjusted. (A dose of snare can be added to the rimshot in any desired proportion.) All the other modules can be used, including the cowbell, woodblock, electrified snare, and the reggae snare. And *Duopad* groups are also possible, such as the natural toms on the pad surface and the electrified toms on the rim, or the timbales on the surface and the bongos on the rim. The transition control opens up a multitude of new sound possibilities. Contact Europa Technology, Inc., 1638 West Washington Blvd., Venice, California 90291, or call (213) 392-4985.

NEW THRONES FROM PEARL

Pearl International, Inc. recently announced the introduction of its new *D-850* and *D-750* Drum Thrones. The *D-850* features a very smooth height adjustment system, using a newly designed stop-lock for added security. It is also equipped with a completely new type of fabric seat, wide-stance double-braced legs for added stability, an extra wing screw to "lock in" the desired tripod spread, and a nylon bushing at the joint to prevent marring and eliminate center tube slippage. The throne may be adjusted in height up to 17 7/8". The *D-750* includes many of the same features (but a lower-profile leg tripod) and height adjustment to 18 1/2". Contact your Pearl dealer or Pearl International, Inc., P.O. Box 111240, Nashville, TN 37222-1240.

NEW YAMAHA CATALOG

The latest additions to the Yamaha System of drums and hardware are presented in a new catalog—featuring dramatic contemporary color photography—from Yamaha International Corporation, Musical Instrument Division.

Drum lines covered in the catalog include the *Tour Series, Recording Series,* and *Stage Series.* The *Tour Series* is now available in *Power Tour Custom, Tour Custom,* and *Power Tour* lines. Both the *Power Tour Custom* and *Tour Custom* lines feature the classic Yamaha *Custom* lacquer finish. For maximum volume and projection, *Power Tour and Power Tour Custom* lines incorporate deeper tom shells.

Recording Custom drums offer the vivid "piano" lacquer finish, which distinguishes Yamaha *Custom* drums. A longer shell design is featured in the *Power Recording Custom* line. *Power Stage* and regular-sized *Stage* drums offer intelligent quality and economy in an impressively functional design.

A wide variety of snare drums are offered in the new catalog, including both all-birch wooden snares in a range of depths, and chrome-finished seamless metal shells. The *9, 8, 7,* and 5 *Series* snares offer the widest choice of materials, depths, and snare mechanisms.

The catalog presents an expanded line of Yamaha hardware, including the lean and functional 5 *Series,* the rugged single-leg 7 *Series,* the unique cross-leg design of the *8 Series,* and the massive *9 Series.* Yamaha's hardware is designed to get all the sound from drums and cymbals without getting in the player's way. These objectives are realized through such features as all-purpose ball mounts, sturdy rod and pipe clamps, and the two-in-one cymbal boom tilter, adjustable to 28 positions.

For further information, see your Yamaha dealer, or contact Yamaha International Corporation, Musical Instrument Division, P.O. Box 7271, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49510.

CHUCK STEWART'S JAZZ FILES

For over three decades, New York photographer Chuck Stewart has been part of the veiled world of jazz musicians, enjoying an uncommon intimacy with many of the most formidable creators of the music. His photographs appear on countless album covers, and regularly in *down beat, Jazz Magazine,* and *Modern Drummer. Chuck Stewart's Jazz Files,* with photos by Stewart and text by Paul Carter Harrison, is a lively introduction to these musicians, centered on Stewart's portraits.

The emphasis is on currently active performers—here are David Murray, Wynton Marsalis, and Lester Bowie—but also included, mostly in performance, are their great seniors: Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Elvin Jones, Dizzy Gillespie, Charles Mingus, Max Roach, and Miles Davis. Sections based on instrumental groups include anecdotal passages from the performers themselves, and each is introduced by Obie Award-winning playwright Paul Carter Harrison, who conveys informally the evolution of a particular sound or musical attitude. Harrison's interviews with Chuck Stewart evoke this fascinating world with vivid sketches of individual performers and tales suggesting something of the difficulties they face, their dedication, and their brilliant artistry. Jazz great Billy Taylor contributes a foreword.

Chuck Stewart's Jazz Files is published by New York Graphic Society Books/Little, Brown, and is available in major bookstores in both cloth and paperback.

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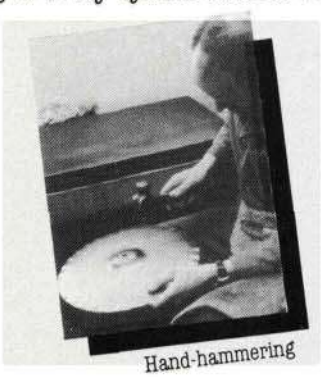

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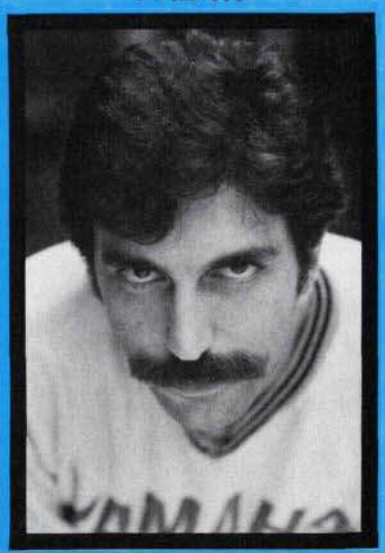

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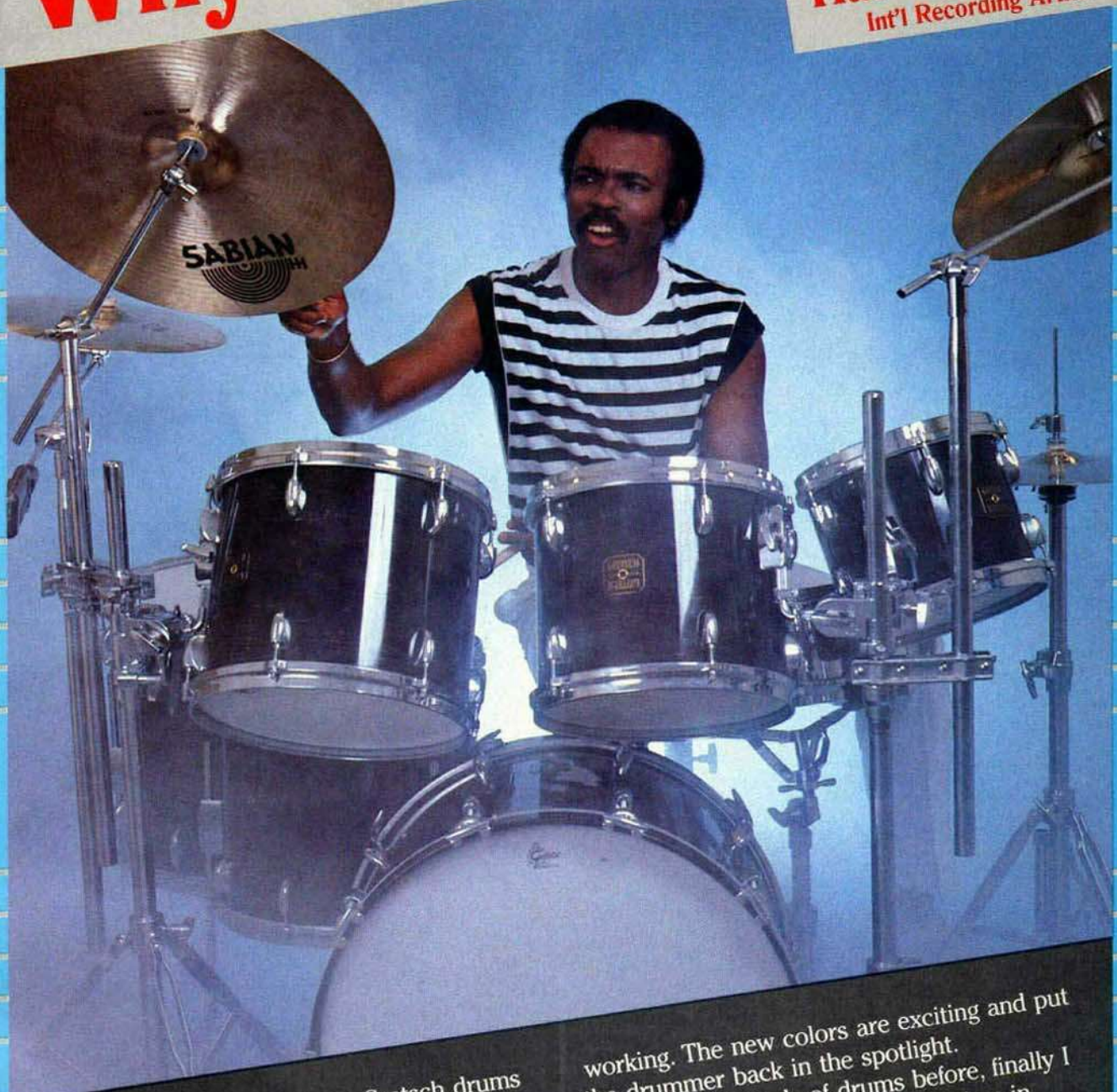

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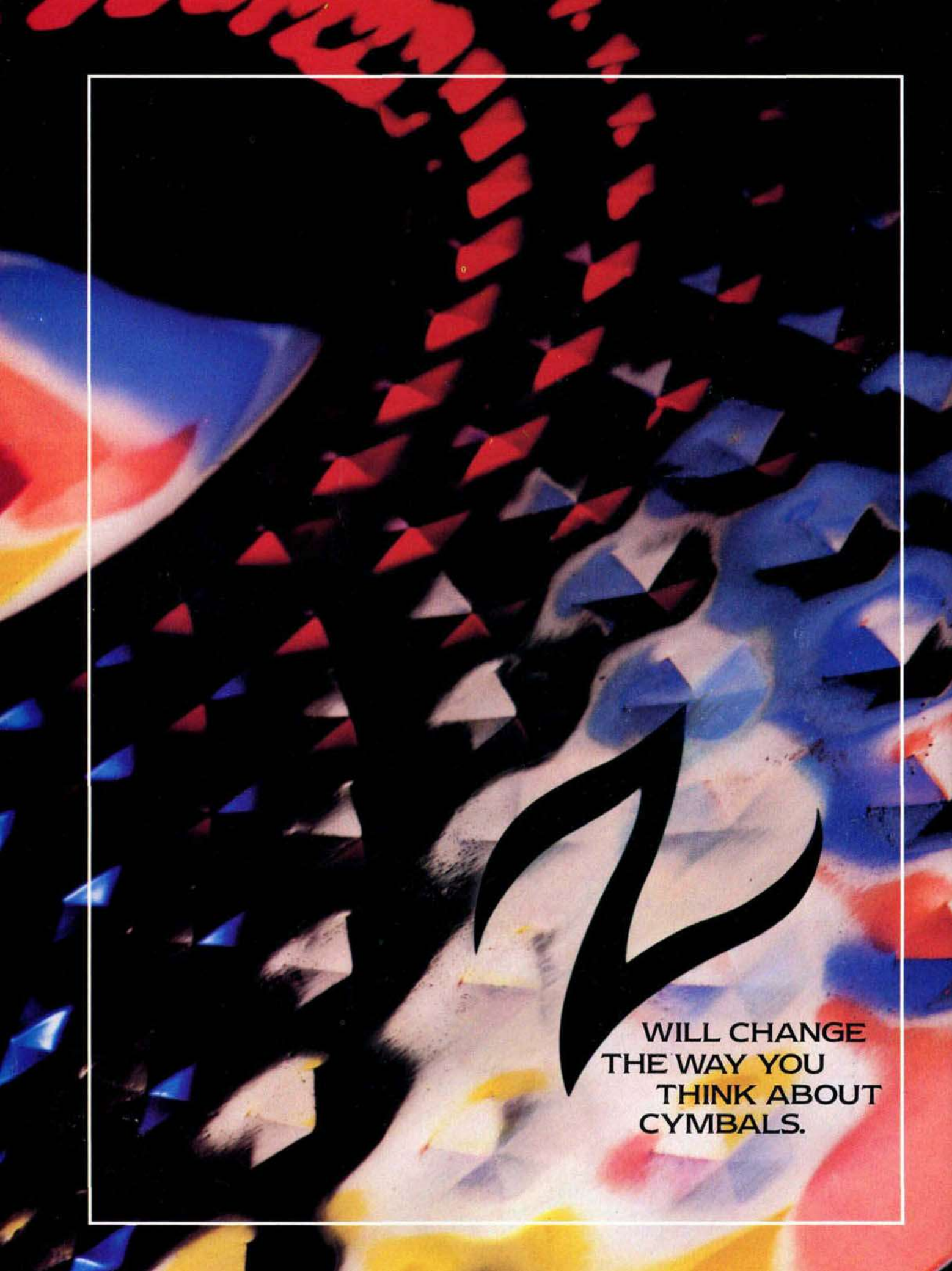
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